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CAUSALITY IN AL-GHAZALI
AVERROES AND AQUINAS

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INTRODUCTION

The principle of causality has enjoyed a unique pre-eminence in metaphysical speculation ever since Aristotle identified the quest for wisdom with the quest for first principles^{and causes} in the first book of the Metaphysics.⁽¹⁾ The title of causality, however, for this pre-eminent role in the undertaking of knowledge has not been left unchallenged by scepticism on grounds of usurped and fictitious supremacy. Scepticism has invariably found itself on the path leading to the repudiation of the alleged coincidence of the spheres of causality and knowledge. This alleged coincidence, the proponents of scepticism have urged, is a gratuitous assumption born of an illegitimate imposition upon the ontological order of an absolute logical pattern with which nature is compelled to conform. The real, in the contingency of its life-process cannot be subsumed, however, under any universal and necessary principle of metaphysical determination. The philosopher, therefore, must surrender the false hope of discovering a causal "logos" underlying cosmic phenomena, and with it the whole undertaking of knowing.

That scepticism, in this nihilistic abolition of causality, re-affirms Aristotle's definition of knowledge in terms of causality is obvious. For in this abolition

is brought out the indissoluble bond which unites causality and knowledge in the common battle of survival they are called upon to fight. It is no part of our design here to undertake a complete refutation of scepticism. Let it suffice for our present purpose to point out the necessary reciprocity involved in the relation of causality to knowledge and knowledge to causality - and in wider terms, of the ontological to the logical realm, wherein causality and knowledge have their respective domains.

* * * * *

Viewed in this broad perspective, the thesis maintained in the present essay is an attempt at tracing the fate of causality in a metaphysical framework of partial scepticism, wherein is affirmed the disjunction of the ontological and the logical realms and with it, the negation of the causal nexus. The issue with which we propose to grapple has grown out of the celebrated controversy of the Peripatetic Arabian Philosophers and the Ash'arite Muslim theologians, as epitomised in the controversy of Al-Ghazali and Averroes, in problem 17 of Tahafut al-Falasifah and Tahafut at-Tahafut. This controversy will be recounted at length in due course. In order to specify the sphere in which our argument will move, we ought to set forth, at the outset, the basic motives of the two parties and the metaphysical and theological interests involved in the controversy.

Al-Ghazali, following the Ash'arite theologians, abandons the Peripatetic metaphysics in the interest of an occasionalism calculated to serve a twofold purpose:

1. The vindication of God's absolute omnipotence and uniqueness ; and
2. The demonstration of the actual possibility of miracle, as a phenomenon capable of rational insertion in the natural scheme of things.

That the Aristotelian, Peripatetic metaphysics, in the judgment of Al-Ghazali, cannot be accommodated to the theological needs involved in these two theses derives from its conception of the cosmic order as homogeneous and endowed with the predicates of essential being. This homogeneity and essentiality are the consequence of an implicit metaphysical determinism latent in the Aristotelian system and its notion of substance as causally operative. Substitute for this system a heterogeneous, occasionalist metaphysics of accidental-contingent being and thereby the omnipotence of God and the possibility of miracle are vindicated in philosophic terms beyond the possibility of dispute.

For Averroes, who sets out to expose the incoherence of Al-Ghazali's doctrine, the contingent-accidental metaphysics of the Ash'arites amounts to a total repudiation of the possibility of knowledge and of the

specific qualities and operations of individual substances. For this repudiation is nothing short of the negation of the possibility of definitions and demonstrations alike and of the ultimate dissolution of all things in utter and undifferentiated identity.

"It is self-evident," Averroes writes, "that things have quiddities and properties necessitating the specific operations of an existing being and on account of which the quiddities, names and definitions of things are differentiated. Were an existing being devoid of a specific operation it would be devoid of a specific nature... and therefore shorn of a specific name and a specific definition. Thus things would become one thing and nothing (at the same time)."⁽²⁾

This re-affirmation of the Aristotelian doctrine of substance, as a center of efficient causation flowing from its specific nature, leads Averroes to the re-affirmation of the Aristotelian doctrine of fourfold causality. Since the effect always bespeaks the cause and its perfection ; and since phenomena are tied up to each other by a necessary principle of conditionality, causality is an indispensable clue to the knowledge of things and of their natures ; so much so that "whoever repudiates causality repudiates reason,"⁽³⁾ and with it the possibility of all genuine science.

This is not the place for a thorough examination of the Averroist critique of Al-Ghazali and the

assessment of its exact significance. It should be pointed out however, at the outset, that the inadequacy of Averroes's acute refutation of Al-Ghazali's position, to which we will have occasion to return, derives from the circumstance that Averroes leaves the major question at issue unanswered. The problem of the possibility of miracle, with which Al-Ghazali is pre-occupied, is waived aside by Averroes as philosophically irrelevant. Averroes in fact, relaxes into his celebrated position of a twofold science (philosophy and theology) entailing a twofold truth, each valid in its own sphere. The full development of this position is to be found in his tract on the "Agreement between Philosophy and Theology", which we will examine later. What Averroes does in this manner is to challenge the very legitimacy of the problem at issue and of its claims for philosophic treatment. In the face of this radical challenge the problem of rationalising miracle with which Al-Ghazali is wrestling - instead of being settled in a satisfactory manner-, re-emerges in its entire acuteness. To Al-Ghazali must be assigned the merit of having undertaken to wrestle with it philosophically. It is true that the metaphysical perspective in which he seeks a solution holds out no promise of success. It is true, further, that Averroes's disdainful rejection of this precarious metaphysical edifice upon which Al-Ghazali erects his theological structure is fully legitimate. But Averroes, by evading the real issue,

has failed to fathom the problem of miracle to its depths. No wonder his cosmic determinism marks a radical failure to see into the supernatural and the meta-cosmic and thus to scan the outermost boundaries of the metaphysical sphere.

Here on^e catches a glimpse of the antinomial character of the problem at issue. The philosopher is called upon to wrestle with a twofold error: the error of theistic occasionalism as metaphysically indefensible, and the error of cosmic determinism as theologically incomplete. It will be seen that the summary dismissal of miracle as philosophically irrelevant is the logical consequence of the intrinsic structure of the Averrois system. The characteristic tone of this system is its total and absolute determinism; a determinism born of a monistic view of the universe and grounded in an absolute intellectualism which refuses to admit faith into the domain of epistemology, on the grounds of heterogeneity. The monistic determinism of the Averroist metaphysics, it will be seen, entails three pernicious metaphysical theses which are of the utmost significance to our present discussion. These are:

- (1). The eternity of the world and the impossibility of the creation ex nihilo.
- (2). The Neo-Platonistic theory of the necessary emanation of the intelligences and the spheres; and
- (3). The rejection of an

actually effective divine providence.

In order to achieve a complete critique of Al-Ghazali's doctrine of causality, therefore, we must proceed a step beyond Averroes. For in rehabilitating causality, Averroes has answered only one half of the metaphysical question which perturbs the mind of the philosopher when he reflects upon the nature of things and the course of cosmic events. Before the philosopher there rises, however, a novel problem no less disturbing than the former : This is the problem of the possibility of God's direct intervention in this course of events miraculously and providentially. Once more, we are confronted with a galaxy of acute problems:

"Is the admission of causal efficacy compatible with faith in divine sovereignty ?

"How can the homogeneous cosmic process allow for the heterogeneous incursion of the Deity into the Domain of concrete existence ?

"And what becomes, finally, of the rational unity of this cosmic process once the irrational and the extraordinary are allowed to make their surreptitious inroads into its domain? "

The issue out of which the present essay has grown, it will be recalled, is the problem that Al-Ghazali proposes in his attack on the Peripatetic doctrine of causality. This can be called the problem of "rationalizing miracle"; i.e. the metaphysical justification of the supernatural in its emergence into the domain of the real. Whoever, in wrestling with this problem, contents himself

with dismissing it as insoluble or as philosophically irrelevant - like Averroes, betrays himself into the hands of his own foes. For he avows thereby his incapacity to give an adequate account of a striking and meaningful aspect of historical reality. Whoever, on the other hand, pushes the enquiry into the very province of reality, and calls into account the actual fact of miracle as a historic event, with a view to affirming the fact of miracle or denying it, is seeking to prove too much. He would beg, that is to say, shooting beyond the mark. The actual reality of miracle as historic fact falls outside the province of metaphysical enquiry. It is a problem for the historian to resolve, not the metaphysician. The metaphysical rationalization of miracle, therefore, begins where the historical ascertaining of the fact of miracle, as a unique and extraordinary emergent in the midst of the historical process, ends. The problem with which the metaphysician can legitimately grapple philosophically is a problem which belongs to a different order from the order of authentic historicity. Its formula is as follows:

"Does the miraculous and the extraordinary compromise in any way the rational unity of the natural process? Is there, that is to say, in the whole sphere of natural reality no room for the heterogeneous and the extraordinary?"

That the formulation of the problem in these terms narrows the field of enquiry to unsuspected limits and determines the direction in which the solution of the

apparent antimony between the natural and the miraculous must be sought can be readily conceded. We have to content ourselves at this stage of the argument with submitting as a mere hypothesis the maxim that metaphysical speculation must bet out from the given reality of that which is. The most primordial metaphysical postulate is the postulate of the priority of being over everything else. A metaphysic which does not have its roots in Being is a metaphysic of non-being and, therefore a metaphysic of sheer inanities. Metaphysics can soar to the loftiest heights and gauge the most abysmal depths, but at the threshold of the sanctuary of Being it must halt with awe. Only of the fountain-head of its own life it cannot and ought not to seek a justification. Only of the most elemental of principles, it cannot and ought not to seek the principle.

From the standpoint of metaphysics and ontology, Al-Ghazali's occasionalist solution of the problem of miracle amounts to an impoverishment of the real, a stripping of the real of the positive predicates of essential substantiality. The praiseworthiness of his motive in achieving this solution must not blind us to the inadequacy of the metaphysical system in which his thought revolves. Nor must the legitimate re-habilitation of the Aristotelian doctrine of substance as causally operative, blind us on the other hand, to the inadequacy of Averroes's approach to the problem of miracle, in his

attempt to expose the fallacies of Al-Ghazali's metaphysical presuppositions. If a total synthesis of the problem at issue is to be achieved, the conscientious searcher must do complete justice to the metaphysical and the theological interests involved in the controversy. Such a synthesis must be sought beyond the metaphysical determinism of Averroes and the theological occasionalism of Al-Ghazali.

* * * * *

It is our purpose in the present essay, once the critical ground has been covered, to formulate a solution of the problem in terms of a metaphysic which admits of the aforesaid synthesis. In this task, we are turning to the Thomist system in which, we believe, the respective claims of philosophy and theology, as regards our problem, are safeguarded. Thomas Aquinas, in stripping the Aristotelian metaphysics of its deterministic implications achieves the signal feat of accomodating it to the theological needs of revealed religion, and thus succeeds in resolving the problem at issue in a satisfactory manner. To vindicate the omnipotence of God, Al-Ghazali pronounces the cosmic scene a purely fictitious stage upon which is displayed the cosmic might of the Creator. No wonder he reduces every cosmic agent to a mere marionette engaged in the performance of a fictitious role in a world of mere ghosts and shadows. That is why a metaphysic of essential being is totally

inacceptable to him. It was this total de-naturalization of nature, this impoverishment of the world of concrete existence which led Thomas Aquinas, as we shall see at length, to engage in an uncompromising polemic against the Ash'arite "Loquentes",- the spiritual forbears of Al-Ghazali and of his occasionalist metaphysics, in book III of the Summa contra Gentiles⁽⁴⁾ and in de⁽⁵⁾ Potentia .

Against the occasionalist metaphysics of the loquentes and their consequent thesis of the inertness of being, Thomas Aquinas teaches that the world of concrete existence is subsistent and real in its own right. This subsistent reality of things is not an external cycle of cosmic inertia, as Aristotle and his Arabic commentators, Avicenna and Averroes held; but it is rather the gracious positing in being by the Creator of the whole manifoldness of the real, generously permitted to develop its life-process in accordance with the laws of its own being. Whenever Thomas Aquinas discusses the problem of free choice, providence, grace, predestination, he insists in emphatic terms that "it is part of the design of God's providence to allow the operation of secondary causes, in order that the beauty of order may be preserved in the universe...and (in order that God) may communicate to creatures the dignity of causality."⁽⁶⁾ For such is God's generosity and God's love that He communicates to His creatures

the power for causal efficacy, which in the most pre-eminent sense, is the prerogative of the Almighty Himself.

It will be readily perceived at this juncture wherein the Thomist reconciliation of the omnipotence of God and the causality of concrete agents is to be sought, a reconciliation with which is bound up the possibility of a complete solution of our problem. The divine omnipotence is not the sole principle of divine activity and of divine self-revelation. Upon God's creative act there presides a twofold principle no less significant than the former: This is the principle of divine wisdom and divine love. The absolute monotheism of Islam must thus give way to a trinitarian theogony, if the rights of the creator and the rights of the creature, as it were, are to be safeguarded.

The pages that follow represent a modest endeavour to corroborate this thesis philosophically.

Chapter One.

Al-Ghazali's Repudiation of Causality.

I

Preliminary Remarks.

The controversy between Al-Ghazali and the Peripatetic philosophers⁽¹⁾ of the East, as epitomized in Tahafut al-Falasifah, can be described as the controversy between Naturalistic Determinism and Supernaturalistic Theism in Islam. The foremost pre-occupation of the Arabian philosophers consisted in the attempt to give a purely rational account of the universe in stringent metaphysical terms. Problems of Islamic theology exercised no appreciable influence upon the metaphysical edifices in the construction of which they were engaged, except limitatively. In fact, the historian of Arabian philosophy can scarcely find the traces of a philosophico-theological synthesis in their systems or even an endeavour to achieve such a synthesis philosophically. What impresses this historian is the circumstance that those philosophers thought and wrote in a well-nigh complete unconsciousness of the contents of Islam. It is as though Islam did not exist for those arrogant heirs of the metaphysical heritage of Greece and Alexandria.

Yet there are two considerations which would seem to prove that philosophy, far from opting for a total abandonment of the battlefield of doctrinal controversies in the East was fully involved in the most bellicose of doctrinal and theological engagements. There is in the first place, the

paramountcy which the metaphysic of oneness⁽²⁾ enjoyed in Arabian metaphysical speculation; and in the second place, the hostility and the wrath which Islamic theologians and the Islamic masses nourished face-to-face with the philosophers and their pernicious teachings.

We have no intention of recounting the story of doctrinal warfare which raged intermittantly between the Philosophers and the theologians of the East, at the end of the Umayyad period and throughout the reign of the Abbasid dynasty -, and this gave birth to Islamic Scholasticism, designated in the East as Kalam.⁽³⁾ What concerns us here is the extent of the reciprocal impact of philosophy on theology and theology on philosophy and the role of Al-Ghazali in the tale of such an impact. That the triumph of Al-Ghazali in Islamic consciousness represents the final bankruptcy of Arabian philosophy in the East ~~and~~ proves conclusively how fruitless was the endeavour of the Muslim scholastics to reconcile the claims of philosophy and theology. It proves, too, how unreal was the allegiance of the Arabian Philosophers to Islam. To put the matter epitomically: The Arabian Philosophers achieved the reconciliation of philosophy and theology, through a total abolition of theology, as it were. The Muslim scholastics, on the other hand, achieved this reconciliation through a total disavowal of philosophic speculation as radically pernicious and blasphemous. Thus was born the

theory of the "two truths " - which pervades all Spanish-Arabian philosophy, on the one hand, and the theory of the irredeemable irreligiousness of the philosophers so forcibly set forth in Al-Ghazali's Tahafut al-Falasifah, on the other.

The radical charge which Al-Ghazali levels on the Peripatetic philosophers in his Tahafut as I hinted previously, is that of naturalistic determinism ; viz. their reluctance to admit of the possibility of the heterogeneous incursion into the natural process of the supernatural and extraordinary. The eternity and perpetuity of the world, the negation of the possibility of creation ex nihilo, of God's knowledge of singulars, of the rational possibility of miracle, and finally, the negation of the possibility of corporeal resurrection -, all these errors betray in the judgment of Al-Ghazali, the reluctance of these Peripatetics to admit the reality of a supernatural order at the head of which stands a Sovereign Agent capable of effecting the designs of His providence imperiously and miraculously.

In the present essay we will confine ourselves to the examination of Al-Ghazali's treatment of one aspect of the problem which, we believe, is typical of the solutions which he adduces to these basic metaphysical and theological issues out of which the twenty questions of the Tahafut have grown. This is the problem of causality in its relation to divine power Al-Ghazali touches upon this problem in the course of his discussion of the 16th. question of the Tahafut ⁽⁴⁾, wherein

it is shown " that the thesis (of the philosophers) regarding the knowledge of the "heavenly souls" of all contingent singulars in this world is gratuitous". Here he expounds the thesis of the philosophers according to which the "separate intelligences" dispose the movements of the heavens and of the bodies in the sublunar world through the mediacy of the "souls of the heavens". Yet for these "souls of the heavens" to effect the particular movements of the spheres they must have a particular knowledge and a particular volition of these movements, distinct from the universal knowledge of the Forms imparted to them by the separate Intelligences. The significance of this Neo-Platonic theory is that it leads to a deterministic scheme of things, the norm of the dynamic development of which is grounded in the knowledge and volition of the celestial agents. The philosophers, in fact, teach that the "souls of the heavens", through their knowledge of the particular movements in question, arrive at the knowledge of all earthly contingent events, as necessarily ensuing upon their (own) original knowledge and will. The logical consequence of this doctrine is that "every event has a contingent cause, until we traverse the series and arrive at the eternal heavenly movements, whereof one part is cause of the other. Hence the series of causes and effects terminates with the particular heavenly movements; since the cogitation of the movements amounts to a cogitation of their consequences and the consequences of these consequences till the end of the series .

"(5)

The Philosophers, Al-Ghazali pursues the argument, seek to account, through this theory of determined heavenly movements, for the possibility of prognostication in a purely naturalistic way, whereby prophecies and dreams are attributed to the soul's keenness in unravelling the secrets of the heavenly movements. Yet the Philosophers, he hastens to remark, are incapable of repudiating the teaching of revealed religion according to which, prophecies and dreams are the outcome of divine revelation, either directly or through the agency of the angels.

The ultimate ground of the untenability of the philosophers' position, however, is the circumstance that it does not tally with the explicit teaching of revealed theology (Shar') regarding the 'primordial Codex' (al-lawh al-Mahfūz) which the Philosophers identify with the cogitations of the Intelligences; or with the possibility of miracle, as a definite departure from the habitual course of events. Indeed that the imaginative, intellective and practical faculties - on the assumption of the Philosophers, - can attain to such a degree of acuteness that the prophet (of even the common man) is capable of prognostication or of miraculous deeds, though complicity with the elements is not to be denied. "What we deny", writes Al-Ghazali, "is (the Philosophers') contention that (the miraculous power of the prophets) is confined to these deeds; and their repudiation of the possibility of transmuting the stick into a snake and of the resuscitation of the dead, etc." Thus we ought to treat of this question," he concludes, "in order to prove the

possibility of miracles and for another reason: namely, the defence of the common belief of the Muslims regarding God's power to do all things" ⁽⁶⁾ .

II

Necessity, Causal and Logical.

With these introductory remarks, Al-Ghazali embarks upon a critical analysis of the principle of causality, with a view to determining its logical and metaphysical status. The problem that preoccupies him at the outset is the problem of the alleged necessity of the causal nexus. For if the chain of events in nature is determined by the movements of the heavenly bodies and the volition of the 'celestial souls' (an-Nufūs as-Samāwiyyah), on the one hand, or the irrevocable laws of generation and corruption, on the other - as the Peripatetics contend-, then the philosopher has one and only one recourse, i.e.: the admission of the inexorable necessity of the mechanism of nature, and with it, the autonomy of the cosmic life face-to-face with the Providence of the Almighty.

Yet, at this very point, Al-Ghazali puts in a fully legitimate question: 'What, indeed, inheres in the notion of necessity, in its relation to the logical and the ontological realms ? And what are the grounds of the predication of this notion of the ontological order, even if its legitimacy in the logical order is readily conceded?'

That Al-Ghazali, in this matter, places us at the very heart of the problem of causality and its alleged inclusion in the notion

of necessity is obvious. For only thus can the critical examination of the twofold notion of necessity and causality yield any positive gain.

"The correlation between what is wont to be taken as cause and what is wont to be taken as effect," he writes at the opening page of Q.17, "is not necessary according to us. For any two entities, neither of which is the other, nor the affirmation or the negation of which is implied in the affirmation or the negation of the other, are not necessary concomitants as regards the existence or inexistence of one or the other; like the quenching of thirst and drinking, satiety and eating, combustion and contact with fire, etc." (7)

It will be noted here that Al-Ghazali encounters no difficulty in admitting readily the legitimacy of the notion of necessity, which the argument pre-supposes, in the sphere of mere logical relations. The notion of necessity ought, in fact, to be confined to the logical categories of identity, implication and disjunction. This is tantamount to saying that the notion of necessity is valid only in the sphere of the specific logical relations underlying the three fundamental laws of logic : the laws of identity, contradiction and excluded middle. Outside this sphere necessity has absolutely no scope, as we shall see more fully in the sequel. The genesis of this notion in the world of contingent, natural relationships is of a purely psychological nature, as Hume later maintained. It is the outcome of a mere psychological habit which the philosophers mistake for imperative, logical necessity. Yet of this alleged

necessity they have none but an empirical proof : viz: recourse to experience. Experience, however, proves merely that the effect "occurs with the cause and not through it " ⁽⁸⁾ (Cum se, non per se : 'Indahu lā bihi). Philosophy must content itself, therefore, with the notion of logical necessity, as rationally admissible. Causal necessity, as a predicate of the order of being, must be abandoned as irrational and inadmissible. For in the order of being, unlike the order of thought, we are not dealing with laws in the strict sense, but merely with contingent processes the terms of which are extrinsic to each other and, therefore, unrelated except in the consciousness of the subject observing them.

Al-Ghazali, thus, proposes to find the solution of the problem at issue in the introduction of a cleavage between the logical and the ontological orders -, a cleavage which permeates his whole metaphysical and theological thought. This position, which we will assess fully later, is inspired by his desire to affirm a twofold thesis:

(1). The total dependance of the cosmic order upon the divine fiat, and (2) the impossibility of transition from the order of thought to the order of being. In this way, not only the whole cosmos is suspended to the throne of the Almighty, as it were; but likewise the possibility of any conclusive knowledge of reality is independent of the drama of becoming enacted upon the cosmic scene. Neither sensibility nor reason can yield man any certitude; only the immediate and direct ⁽⁹⁾ revelation of the Creator can enlighten his heart. Thus is

affirmed God's sovereignty as the unique source of all activity, all being and all knowledge.

It is to the credit of Al-Ghazali that he concedes, at least, the reality of logical necessity. The precise status of this necessity in Al-Ghazali's epistemology need not detain us here. So much at least is certain: Al-Ghazali asserts, whenever the problem of causality recurs in his works, that necessity is admissible only where a logical absurdity is involved. Thus in the last pages of Q.17 of Tahafut, he finds himself driven to concede that God's power does not extend to impossibles, as some of the Mutakallims maintained,⁽¹⁰⁾ on the grounds of the inherent necessity of the logical relationship between the conditioned and its condition. The same concession is made in the Iqtisad, in the course of the discussion of God's power in its relation to natural operations. Here Al-Ghazali envisages the problem of production or generation (Tawallud), enshrined by the Mu'tazilites⁽¹¹⁾ and the Beripatetics as a fundamental metaphysical principle. The opponent argues that the notion of God's universal and absolute power is incompatible with this phenomenon of generation -, according to which one object is generated by another - a phenomenon the reality of which is confirmed by the testimony of reason and sense - experience alike. Against this thesis Al-Ghazali argues that, the notion of generation is reducible upon examination to the notion of "issuing forth"⁽¹²⁾ - as the "child is said to issue forth (yakhrujj) from its mother's womb". Whenever, therefore, there is no container and no contained, the notion of a cause 'producing or generating:

an effect is unintelligible. Nor can it be urged that such 'production' of the effect by the cause is attested by experience; since all that experience attests is that it is "contemporaneous with it only". (13)

If the notion of generation, in this crude materialistic guise, is discarded then presumably all activity must be referred unconditionally to God. God's power being the sufficient reason of every natural operation, the thesis that "God could create the movement of the hand without that of the ring,... and could create will without knowledge and knowledge without life," (14) all of which are presumed to be conditionally related one to the other -, would receive the semblance of plausibility. To this Al-Ghazali retorts by invoking two principles :

1. The principle of necessary conditional relationality;
- and 2. The principle of limitation of power to the sphere of possibility ; since God's power does not extend to what involves contradiction in itself, because this is logically impossible.

The claim that God can create knowledge in the inanimate and will in the irrational, (as some Mutakallims held) or assign two objects to the same space is absurd, because it violates both of the two said principles. (15) Whenever, on the other hand, there is no necessary conditional relationality between two entities, nor does their interrelation involve any logical contradiction, we can in no way assert any necessary correlation between them. (16) And of this order is the principle of causality.

In fact, we can find according to Al-Ghazali three modes of relationship between pairs of entities:

1. The relationship of reciprocity,- according to which the negation of the one implies necessarily the negation of the other. Ex. right and left, above and below.

2. The relation of antecedance and consequence - as in the relation of the conditioned to its condition. Here, too, the negation of the antecedant entails the negation of the consequent; "so that if we find the knowledge of the person follow upon his life and his will upon his knowledge", we conclude necessarily "that the assumption of the privation of life leads to the privation (intifa') of knowledge and the assumption of the negation of knowledge to the prigation of will. This is described as the condition, viz. that which is indispensable for the existence of the object, but only in such a way that the existence of the object is not through it but with it and alongside it". (17)

3. The relation of cause and effect - whereby the negation of the cause entails the negation of the effect, only when the effect has one cause. Assuming, however, that the effect has more than one cause, then it follows that the negation of all the causes would lead to the negation of the effect, but not the negation of any one single cause.

The validity of this causal relationship, as necessarily imperative, Al-Ghazali goes on to argue, rests on the validity of two antecedant suppositions: a. The a priori admission of the principle of causality, as applicable to any real sequence under examination -, which is in question; and b. The exhaustive knowledge of the series of causes operating in that sequence. (18)

It will be readily perceived that Al-Ghazali has restated here the position maintained in the Tahafut, according to which

a necessary relationship exists only between logical concepts, but not between real entities. The principle of causality, as the third class of relationships shows, is necessary only on the assumption of a necessary causal law, universally valid, (and this is a *petitio principii*)- or on the assumption of a complete knowledge of all the causes operating in any given natural process. Al-Ghazali discounts emphatically the latter possibility, in the first alternative (*al-Maqam al-awwal*) of Q.17 - on the grounds of a theory of 'Occult causes' eluding the discernment of human sensibility.⁽¹⁹⁾ There, remains, therefore, two modes of necessary relationship which are logically valid: logical implication and conditional relationality. The transition from these two categories to the category of causality, as an ontological principle,- as we have seen, is illegitimate, as is all transition from the order of thought to the order of being.

III

The Divine Prerogatives of Sovereignty and Omnipotence.

The critical analysis of the principle of causality and its deterministic implication has led Al-Ghazali thus to confine the notion of necessity to the sphere of pure logical relations. Following the Ash'arite Mutakallims (as we shall^{see} at length in the subsequent chapter), he achieves this conclusion with a twofold purpose:

1. The reduction of the cosmic order to a series of purely contingent events upon which reason exercises no positive sway,

and wherein nothing is ontologically necessary or absolute.

2. The vindication of God's absolute power to effect his creative designs through His sheer arbitrary fiat. In as much as any form of cosmic determinism would militate against this absolute power, the norm and principle of the development of the cosmic life must be grounded in the free determination of the divine will.

True to the Ash'arite spirit of Orthodox Islam, Al-Ghazali asserts that God is the sole agent whose foremost and exclusive prerogative is unlimited and gratuitous activity. Outside this activity there is nothing but sheer inertness and passivity. Viewed in its totality, the metaphysical and theological system of Al-Ghazali presents itself to the vision of the observer as a sidereal system -, at the summit of which shines forth the infinite light of the Almighty devouring in its superabundance all things and reducing them to the complete nullity of utter transparency with the divine luminosity. Being, as the superabundant store of all perfection, is the unique predicate of God, outside whom there is only non-being and darkness. Power, wisdom, will and life are not ontological predicates of the Creator in which the creature participates, albeit in an imperfect and fragmentary manner. They are predicates of God alone, exclusively and pre-eminently. "The picture of the universe", as depicted by Al-Ghazali, writes Wensinck,⁽²⁰⁾ "is of a different aspect."⁽²¹⁾ Ghazali does not see in existence anything save the Unique Being, who for some unknown reason, has at one moment of eternity figured out and realized a

world which possesses in itself neither existence nor the faculty for action. This conception of the world could be described as pantheism. In fact, this designation is altogether inappropriate. For, if for pantheism, all is God, to Ghazali on the contrary, God is all. According to pantheism God does not exist except through the universe. According to Ghazali the universe does not exist at all, God being the sole existent. The doctrine of Ghazali is semitic monotheism seen through the prism of neo-Platonism."

(22)

It is this vision, this obsession, with the uniqueness of God and His absolute sovereignty which leads Al-Ghazali to discourse at length on the total nullity of things when viewed in the perspective of God's infinity and uniqueness, in the 'Niche of lights'. At the highest stage of mystical vision, when the Truth of Truths is disclosed to their sight, "the Seers (al-'Arifun) rise from the plane of figures (wajaz) to the pinnacle of reality... and perceive through visual sight (al-Mushahadah al-'Iyanyyah) that there is nothing in being but God, and that everything is perishing save His face, not because it perishes at one moment of time, but because it is perishing eternally and everlastingly, since it cannot be imagined otherwise. For everything other than God, when considered in itself, is absolute not-being; and when considered from the standpoint of the being which it receives from the First Truth is seen to be-not in itself, but only from the standpoint of the author of its being,- so that the sole existent is God's Face. Everything thus has two faces:

a face unto itself and a face unto God. With respect to its own face it is not; with respect to God's face, it is. Therefore, nothing is, save God and His Face; and hence everything is transient eternally and everlastingly, except His Face".⁽²³⁾ Nor do these Seers, Al-Ghazali goes on, "have to await the last Day to hear God's call: 'Whose is the sovereignty today - It is God's, the One and the Triumpher!' Because this call dings endlessly in their ears. Nor do they understand by this saying : God is greatest (Allahu Akbar) that He is greater than others. God be exalted! There is no other being with Him, for Him to be greater than it. None has the rank of equality (al-Ma'iyah) with Him but only that of posteriority (at-Taba'iyah); indeed, none has being save through His Face - so that His Face alone is".⁽²⁴⁾

In the Ihya' (vol.IV), Al-Ghazali returns with the same insistence to this theme. The confession of God's uniqueness (at-Tawhid) is here described as comprising four gradational levels or stages:

1. There is, first, the stage of verbal avowal of God's unity, without any awareness of its implications.
2. There is, second, the consent of the heart to the profession of the lips.
3. Third, there is the stage of the Elect (al- Muqarrabun) "who see intuitively through the light of Truth that the multiplicity of things derives entirely from the one source, which is the Unique, the Triumpher."
4. And, finally, there is the stage of the Truthful (as-

Siddiqun), "who see only the One in the universe. It is this vision of the Truthful which the mystics call: 'Extinction in Unity' (Al-Fana'fit-Tawhid)⁽²⁵⁾.

In the moral sphere, the total resignation of the will unto God (Tawakkul)⁽²⁶⁾ can rest only on the last two stages. For at these stages man attains to a consciousness of God as the sole Agent, from whom is all penury and all abundance, all fortune and all misfortune. When you have attained this stage, Al-Ghazali writes, "you perceive that there is no agent but God; and that everything that is (whether a creature or a possession, a giving or a denying, death of life, poverty or wealth, etc...) are to be referred to God as their unique source and author. When you have perceived this you cease to direct your gaze to any one else. Thus your hope, confidence and trust would be placed in Him, since He is the unique and exclusive Agent."⁽²⁷⁾

It is, therefore, not merely a sign of feeble faith for the believer to attribute activity to any agent other than God; it is the very definition of polytheism (Ishrak), the disavowal of the real uniqueness of God -, a disavowal occasioned by the cunning insinuations of the Devil or by man's ignorance of God's hidden ways in executing His designs mysteriously and imperceptibly. Thus the believer, in his ignorance and short-sightedness, can be likened unto an ant, which, perceiving the pen tracing its course on the paper, imagines that the pen is the real cause of writing, and not the calligrapher who causes the movement of both the hand and the pen.⁽²⁸⁾

Yet the paradoxical aspect of it is that, despite this unawareness of the uninitiated to the mystical mysteries, God is the most evident of things, of whom the whole creation tells overtly as its sole Author and Sovereign. He is like the light which is imperceptible owing to the intensity of its luminosity. Therefore, its brilliance is best discerned through its privation, i.e. darkness. But of God's light there can be no setting, and of His everlasting presence no recession. That is why it is only given to the elect to discern the radiance of His light and to be utterly extinct therein. When these Elect have attained the stage at which "they see the whole world as the workmanship of God and know it as the workmanship of God, and love it as the workmanship of God", they would in effect "be seeing, knowing and loving God alone". And of them would it truly be said that they are real confessors of unity (Mu - Wahhid), who see God alone and who are conscious of themselves only inasmuch as they are God's slaves. (29) Of these it is said : "They are dead to themselves; and to them is the allusion made in the phrase: 'We were through we; now that we are dead unto we, we are without we.'"

Here the intellect -, overwhelmed by this grandiloquent exaltation of the Creator to the unattainable altitudes of absolute transcendence and sovereignty and bewildered at this sense of awesome obsession with His uniqueness, as though in the grips of dread lest this uniqueness be challenged or gainsaid to the jeopardy of God's divinity, as it were -, is led naturally to enquire: 'Wherein does Al-Ghazali find the specific predicate of God's uniqueness ? In what depths of the abyss of the inner life of God

that is to say, is the exclusive Godhead of the Almighty to be sought? It is a cardinal tenet of Ash'arism, to which Al-Ghazali subscribes, that in God there is will, wisdom, power and life. The determination of the manner in which these predicates inhere in God's essence and the controversy which raged in Ash'arite-Mutazilite circles over the distinctness of these attributes from God's essence, leaves unaffected the positive reality of these attributes. Against the non-Attributists (al-Mu'attilah), the Mu'tazilites and the peripatetic philosophers, the Ash'arite school taught that these attributes exist in God, distinctly from His essence; the ~~modality~~ ⁽³¹⁾ of this distinctness being waived agnostically aside as rationally indeterminable.

Yet once this has been conceded, it remains legitimate to ask: In what relationship do these attributes of wisdom, will and life stand to each other in the theology of Al-Ghazali? The question becomes all the more disturbing when it is contended, in the manner of Al-Ghazali and the Ash'arite doctors, that these attributes are distinct from God's essence. ⁽³²⁾ For whoever affirms the identity of these attributes with God's essence may well be relieved of ~~determining~~ the burden of determining the organic relationship in which these attributes stand one to the other; since for him the Almighty knows, wills and acts through the same identical movements of self-unfoldment. But such is not the position of Al-Ghazali and of his spiritual Ash'arite forbears.

It might be suggested in answering the question proposed above that these attributes stand to each other in a position of equality of metaphysical moment. Despite the instability of such a position

which threatens to introduce multiplicity into the unity of the Divine Being, it has at least the merit of conceding to God an 'ontological equipoise of self-subsistence'. It is, as we shall see later, an imperative requisite of any adequate conception of the inner life of God and of His ontological completeness and integrity, as it were; because in it God is seen in the light of the 'ontological opulence of His being'. The temptation to subject God Himself to the inexorable dialectic of monistic reduction is a grave temptation. Yet any theology which fails to do justice to the fullness of God's being, by stripping Him of the positive predicates of ontological perfection, finds itself worshipping in the temple of a semi-deity, in fact, of a false surrogate of the Deity, an idol and a scarecrow.

When we turn to Al-Ghazali's theology to see wherein the uniqueness of his all-wise and all-powerful God consists, we find ourselves face-to-face with a striking divinity - a divinity in whom the attribute of omnipotence has devoured all other attributes. We believe, he writes, in 'Kitab qawa'id al-Aqa'id', ⁽³²⁾ that God the Almighty is living, omnipotent, sovereign, victorious; is free from imperfection and impotency and succumbs not to dormancy or slumber; and is not subjected to extinction or death. That He is Lord of the worlds, visible and invisible; the Lord of majesty and sovereignty. His are dominion and victory, creation and ordination. Heaven is at the reach of His outstretched arm; and the Creation is subdued to His might. That His alone are the prerogatives of creation and authorship; production and invention. He fashioned the creatures and their deeds, and meted out their possessions and their

terms (sing. ajal). Nothing ordained can liberate itself from His grip or wrest its freedom from the decrees of His power. Of His designs there is no count and to His knowledge there are no bounds. "(34)

The contention of the Philosophers and the Mu'tazilah, that God's absolute might is conditioned by His wisdom and justice, is repudiated by Al-Ghazali as blasphemous. The arbitrariness of God's will and the absoluteness of His power are such, Al-Ghazali argues, that no limitative condition can be assigned to the operation of His power. Wisdom and justice can have no scope where the decrees of His will are involved. God, in fact, can exact the intolerable (ma la yutaq); torture the innocent without remuneration (bila 'iwad). He can even refrain from exacting righteousness or assign reward and punishment to righteousness and sin. Since nothing devolves upon Him, whether His creatures be consigned to eternal bliss or external damnation, He needs not have regard to the fitting in their behalf (ri'ayat al-aslah). It is true He has commanded the Prophet to admonish and exhort; but whether men hearken unto these exhortations or not is a matter of complete indifference to Him. For it is upon themselves that they bring judgment. (35)

'Yet what becomes of God's wisdom and justice and its nominal affirmation by Al-Ghazali in the face of this naked and despotic sovereignty of the Almighty?' one might candidly ask at this juncture. There is in man's soul a deep-seated will-to-holiness which refuses to bend before injustice and tyranny even if perpetrated by God Himself. Whenever the alleged absoluteness of God's sovereignty and His total independence from every rational principle is vindicated, this will-to-holiness raises an indignant voice of censure, in the

name of a no less absolute law of justice and righteousness to which the Almighty Himself is compelled to submit. And yet the dramatic aspect of the matter is that this will-to-holiness is docile to the point of meekness and utter self-effacement. The voice of censure it raises is not the rebellious and nihilistic outburst of the wicked and untamed will which refuses to abide by any transcendent law of righteousness. For the holy are meek and humble like children. Therefore they rejoice in nothing more than they rejoice in the peace of identifying themselves with the righteous will of the Almighty; but only because the name of the Almighty is 'Holy, God the Lord of Hosts.'

For Al-Ghazali, however, this rebellious disposition of man to question the authority and sovereignty of God is the outcome of the pernicious teaching of the Mu'tazilah who have "imposed constraint upon God's acts."⁽³⁶⁾ To speak of injustice in God is unintelligible. Justice and injustice are as impredicable of God as "distraction of the wall and play of the wind". Injustice is an intelligible concept only in a sphere of volitional activity where conflicting wills intercross; or the order of their hierarchic subsumption is violated. Thus the acts of an agent are said to be unjust when he encroaches upon the domain of another or, when he disobeys the injunction of a legitimate superior. But where is a domain to be found which is not God's? And where is the sovereign to whom it is given to command the Lord of lords?⁽³⁷⁾

Nor is the Mu'tazilites' subjection of God to a 'law of Reason', in the name of this sovereign wisdom admissible either. For wisdom, when predicated of God, can only mean His "knowledge

of the order of things and the power to dispose them providentially. (38)"

And in this notion there is nothing to vitiate the notion of God's arbitrary fiat and His power to do anything, however repugnant to man's moral consciousness. Without undertaking at this stage of the argument to examine the doctrine of Al-Ghazali, we cannot omit to observe how unreal is his admission of the notion of divine wisdom and divine justice. For in point of actual fact the attribute of divine wisdom, as conceived by Al-Ghazali is wholly reducible to the attribute of power; the two are indeed indistinguishable. The wisdom which he predicates of God is not the wisdom which the philosopher, in the manner of Aristotle, can describe as the beatitudinous act of God enjoying the contemplation of His essence and in which the highest manifestation of the notion of life is revealed. (39) Nor is it a mode of participation in this highest and most godlike of the operations of the soul, which is the prerogative of those who are given to the contemplation of the Truth. (40) The wisdom which Al-Ghazali predicates of God is reducible to the notion of 'practical cunning', the sheer craftsmanship of the 'Deus Faber'. Its definition is conceivable only in terms of power. (41)

The most striking aspect of this notion of divine wisdom, conceived as mere 'practical cunning' is that it leads to the impoverishment of the inner life of God. In fact, one is left at a loss in seeking to specify in its terms (as Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas do) the very notion of divine life. For what indeed can Al-Ghazali mean by predicating life (Hayat) of God, except this buoyant and aimless activity of a capricious despot who acts for

(42)
the sheer pleasure of acting; a creator who brings forth into being, in accordance with the precepts of His sheer creative might, a whole host of creatures, about whose existence and destiny He is totally unconcerned? And yet what a paradox?— The knowledge of the most insignificant movement of the most insignificant of these creatures, Al-Ghazali hastens to add, escapes not the vision or fore-ordination of this indifferent Creator ! (43)

A far graver paradox will be displayed to sight when we turn to Al-Ghazali's conception of the cosmic order in its relation to this absolute omnipotence of the God-Despot of orthodox Islam. This is the paradox of the Mighty Creator producing a world of ghosts and shadows, an unreal and flimsy world which has no life and no energy in its bowels. Here, the observer having hearkened with complete composure to the tale of God's creative might, cannot help crying out in amazement : "The Almighty has travailed and brought forth lifeless corpses. He has conceived and, behold, His offsprings are Ghosts and Shadows!"

Witnessing the incommensurability between the might and wisdom of God and His warped workmanship, he cannot help reflecting how unavailing is the allegedly infinite resourcefulness of the Almighty ...Why, indeed, should it be otherwise and why should the Almighty generate a genuine progeny, endowed with the predicates of dynamic being; a progeny capable of rising to the plane of participation in the very life of the Creator - is a riddle which Al-Ghazali's metaphysics and theology cannot unravel.

IV

The Inertness of the Ontological order.

The absolute and arbitrary might of God, having been vindicated, there remains a serious problem to reckon with : the apparent dynamism of things and their capacity for self-development. To reconcile this apparent causality of things with the omnipotence of God, the philosopher must show the point at which these two parallel dynamisms (that of the Creator and that of the creature) impinge one upon the other, and the nature of the inner relationship between them. Without nullifying either term in this relationship, he must be capable of unravelling the secret of the ontological process in which the creator and the creature are mutually involved and the principles presiding upon this process.

It should be pointed out, at the outset, that the solution of the apparent antinomial conflict between the fact of natural causality and the fact of divine omnipotence might take one of two forms :

1. The insistence on the irreducible autonomy of the cosmic order, as a self-contained system, developing its life-process in accordance with the immanent laws of its own being, independent^{ly} of any extrinsic agency (even if such an agency were said to exist);

2. Second, the vindication of the absoluteness of the divine power, as the unique principle of ontological determination, beyond which there is only inertness and not-being. The former we shall call naturalistic (or deistic) ⁽⁴⁴⁾ Determinism ; the latter we shall call Theistic Occasionalism.

The Peripatetic Philosophers and the Mu'tazilah alike professed a doctrine of causal efficacy, as a concomitant of their metaphysic of substance. ⁽⁴⁵⁾ In this they set themselves in opposition to the Ash'arite doctors, who predicated efficacy of God alone, as will be seen later. In refuting this doctrine, Al-Ghazali undertakes to show, from the standpoint of God's might, the perniciousness of this deterministic theory and, especially, its consequences for the doctrine of miracle. Having stripped the causal nexus of the predicates of necessity, as we have seen, he proceeds to show the error implicit in a theory of substantial determination.

A. It might be maintained, in the first place, that it is the natural agent (e.g. fire) which is the cause of the effect following upon it (i.e. combustion). Yet the only evidence which can be adduced in the support of this thesis is the empirical perception of the sequence according to which combustion ensues upon ignition, satiety upon nutrition, death upon the cutting of the throat. Experience (al-Mushahadah), however, is incapable of assigning the necessary grounds of this cause-effect ^{sequence} in question ⁽⁴⁶⁾ to the empirically assignable agent. Inasmuch as sense-experience cannot exhaustively circumscribe the data with which the validity of any universal proposition is bound up, no necessary ⁽⁴⁷⁾ judgments can be enunciated on merely empirical grounds.

In view of this incapacity of sense-perception to exhaust all its data, it can be maintained with complete plausibility that "there might exist in the principles of things (Mabadi'l Wujud) certain agents and causes from which...events emanate whenever they impinge one upon the other; and yet are so constant that we are

unable to discern their presence, owing to the fact that they do not perish or recede, like variable objects whose recession enables us to discern their reality by discerning the difference (between their existence and non-existence)" ⁽⁴⁸⁾ This hypothesis is actually conceded by the authorities among the Philosophers (Muhaddiqun), who teach that things receive their specific qualities and forms from the 'dator formarum' ⁽⁴⁹⁾, once they are naturally disposed for their reception.

Although there is a 'formal' likeness between the Kantian and the Ghazalian theses, the motives of the two thinkers are in no way identical. The thesis of Al-Ghazali is that the testimony of experience, not being exhaustive, the critic can assume the hypothetical possibility of the existence of 'occult causes' operating in nature. To proceed beyond this hypothetical possibility, however, two theses have to be sustained :

- a. The insufficiency of the empirical causal series, attested by experience, to account for the natural effect under consideration
- b. The actual reality of an occult cause, (or of a series of such causes) to which the natural effect can be positively referred.

The former is the old Ash'arite thesis according to which bodies are wholly shorn of any power or efficacy and, therefore, are incapable of generating any form of natural movement. The full development of this occasionalist theory is to be found in the sequel. ⁽⁵⁰⁾ It is noteworthy in this context that Al-Ghazali is silent on the metaphysical justification of this theory, both in the Tahafut and in his major works; as though the doctrine stood in no need of any justification but had to be accepted as the tacit

groundwork of his metaphysics. There is no doubt, however, that he subscribes to this Ash'arite theory as a necessary corollary of the thesis which, as we have already seen, represents the coping-stone of his whole theological scheme; I mean, the doctrine of the absolute sovereignty and omnipotence of God.

As to the positive reality of an ('occult cause' to which efficacy in all the operations of nature ought to be referred this too is no other than the Almighty whose all-pervading light is so dazzling that it cannot be discerned except by the privileged visionaries. (51) These visionaries, unlike the common run of men, are not deceived by the appearances of things, so as to presume to see the forms of existing things as subsisting in themselves. Indeed, they see nothing save God's Face in all things. Thus it is "that they see nothing but God is seen with it. Some of them even go the length of saying: we have seen nothing but God was seen before it. For some of them see things through Him, others... see Him through things...because He is indissolubly united to all things, and like the light, makes all things visible." (52)

The total presence of God to the creature, as we have already seen, ought to be construed in terms of His absolute power and sovereignty. God's consciousness of the Creation, His foreordination of all things, in accordance with the designs of His Providence are all reducible to one and only one reality: the arbitrary fiat of the Creator of whose might every movement and every activity is the overt manifestation.

B. The existence of a primary cause, distinct from secondary

agents, might be conceded by the opponent without surrendering the deterministiv thesis. The opponent, in fact, might argue that the dispositions of things for the reception of the 'forms' (emanating from the 'Primary Cause' (or causes) are determined by the specific natures of these agents which are the substrata (sing. Mahall) of generation and corruption. The mode of emanation of the 'forms' from these primary causes, being determined by their intellectual nature; and the specific dispositions of the substrata being immutable, it follows that a natural agent must needs act in a uniform and determinate manner, when the primary cause impinges upon it. (53)

To rebut this argument of neo-Platonic emanationism, Al-Ghazali adopts two courses. The first consists in showing that the mode of activity of the Primary Cause (or causes) in question, contrary to the gratuitous assumption of the neo-Platonists, belongs to the category of voluntary activity. The issue between voluntary and necessary activity, as regards God, represents the substance of the Third Disputation of the Tahafut. Here Al-Ghazali launches a vehement attack on the deterministic doctrine of emanation, as professed by the Neo-Platonists. (54) Their verbal avowal of creation he argues, is mere dissimulation and duplicity. For on their teaching, it follows that God, being divested of all attributes, volitional activity is impredicable of Him, so that whatever emanates from Him emanates through a mode of absolute necessity, "as the effect ensues necessarily upon the cause... the shade upon the figure and light upon the sun." (55) Whenever, therefore, they

speak of God as the Creator (Khaliq) or the Demiurge (Sani')
 they are only speaking figuratively. For many adequate notion of
 creation or of activity is unintelligible except in correlation
 with the notions of knowledge and will. ⁽⁵⁶⁾ To speak of God,
 therefore, in the manner of the Philosophers, as the necessary
 cause of the universe, or rather the logical ground "without which
 the existence of the universe cannot be conceived," ⁽⁵⁷⁾ is to miss
 the import of creation altogether - and is in fact, a mere
 subterfuge whereby the Philosophers seek to appease the orthodox.
 This circumstance is confirmed by the specious theory of the
 eternity of the world, which is incompatible with the doctrine of
 creation ex nihilo; or the predication of volitional activity of
 God. For according to our belief, Al-Ghazali writes, "Production
 (Ihdath) is the translation of an object from non-being to being" ⁽⁵⁸⁾
 - a doctrine which is absolutely incompatible with the notion of
 an externally subsisting universe.

As a final evidence of the disavowal of Creation by the
 Philosophers, one can adduce their very monistic metaphysics.
 For according to them the One can give rise only to the one -,,
 the multiplicity of created things being the final stage in a
 progressive series of emanations. To give the semblance of
 verisimilitude to this preposterous theory, the neo-Platonists
 invent a fantastic emanationist scheme, at the head of which stands
 the One, who knows himself and thereby gives rise to the whole
 series of Separate Intelligences. Unlike the One, the First of
 these separate Intelligences cogitates the One as the supreme
 source of perfection, and cogitates itself as necessary through

the one from which it emanates, and as contingent through its own being. The former act of self-gogitation gives rise to the Second Intelligence, the latter to the soul of the first planetary sphere and its body respectively. Yet upon close scrutiny this fantastic emanationist scheme crumbles like a baseless construction, because it rests on no other ground save the idle play of the imagination.⁽⁵⁹⁾ The only recourse left before the conscientious searcher, Al-Ghazali pursues the argument, is to accept the teaching of revealed religion respecting a free and omnipotent Agent "Who executes whatever He pleases and decrees as He wishes; Creator of things in their distinctions and identity in accordance with His sheer fiat"⁽⁶⁰⁾ - a teaching enunciated by the Prophets and corroborated by their miraculous deeds, The Philosophers had better accept "these precepts on the authority of the prophets... and leave aside queries about quantities, qualities and quiddities, for this is beyond the grasp of human faculties. (Was it not on this account that the Prophet(Muhammad) enjoined): 'Ponder God's creation but do not enquire into His essence.'⁽⁶¹⁾

Yet Al-Ghazali is not unaware that the admission of the arbitrary fiat of the Creator as the sole ground of all operations in nature entails a whole host of serious absurdities. For if we let the notion of a necessary causal sequence drop and refer all operations to the caprice of the Creator, then knowledge would lose all its stringency and the configurations of things would be shorn of any recognizable Natures. In the midst of this fanciful world, where everything is shorn of the predicates of constancy of necessity, man is reduced to the impossibility of making any positive assertions about things or even of presuming to recognize

the identity of anything that is. (62)

In grappling with this problem, Al-Ghazali finds himself driven in perfect consequence with the initial assumptions of his theistic occasionalism, to consent to bear the whole burden of this revolting scepticism. The power of God is to be defined, according to him, as an absolute faculty capable of reference to all possibles, and since there is clearly no limit to the range of possibilities then there is no limit to the scope of this faculty. (63) It would seem, however, that the allegedly unlimited range of possibility must give way, upon closer scrutiny, to the law of contradiction. For obviously whatever involves any logical contradiction is impossible even, for divine power. This Al-Ghazali concedes without abandoning however the notion of infinite possibility or acknowledging therein any rational limitation of divine power. The revised notion of possibility becomes thus coterminous with that of logical consistency. (64) Whatever involves logical contradiction must be dismissed as being outside the sphere of possibility. Such, as we have seen, is the whole class of entities whose correlation involves logical necessity or conditional relationality. (65) The relationship between a natural agent and a natural patient falls outside these two categories, as we have shown previously. From the standpoint of God's infinite power every real entity is in effect contingent and therefore possible. The intellect cannot postulate a necessary coincidence between the existence of the possible and our consciousness of this existence, since God can create in us knowledge about the inexistence of the possible. (66) No a priori

judgment can therefore be enunciated with respect to the modality of the possible. In its objective reality, and consequently in relation to the intellect, the possible stands in a position of utter indeterminateness. The ground of its modal determination lies in the free activity of God, with Whom alone rests the decree to bring it into being or withhold from it the title of ontal actuality. Thus does it come about that God might decree that a phenomenon shall depart from its natural course, without violence to the contingent ontological order in which this departure is effected. Such a departure would not entail any violence with regard to our knowledge of the phenomenon in question, because God would infuse in us simultaneously with the event, the knowledge corresponding to the modal determination (67) He has decreed that it should receive since all eternity,

C. Throughout this whole polemic against the Peripatetics, 'Al-Ghazali has obviously been arguing at a disadvantage. For he has been fighting the Peripatetic philosophers on their own territory. This, he keenly perceives, is bound to entail metaphysical concessions which he is only too reluctant to make. The emanationist scheme of the Philosophers, their doctrine of elemental dispositions; their theory regarding the primary cause or 'Dator Formarum'; their illuminationist hypotheses; and their affirmation of a necessary causal nexus in nature are fundamentally gratuitous and baseless. The critical examination of these questions might help to reveal to the uninstructed the incoherence of their systems and the inconclusiveness of their arguments against the rational possibility of miracle. But this procedure

is fraught with dangers and misconceptions which could be avoided if these metaphysical phantasies are allowed to go.

At this juncture, Al-Ghazali casts off the 'metaphysical mask' he has so cunningly worn throughout this whole dialectical conflict with the Philosophers. At one stroke he casts to the wind all metaphysical structures and all metaphysical assumptions. Once more this vision is fixed upon the focal center of absolute divine power. To rationalize the possibility of miracle in a conclusive manner, the metaphysician needs none save this 'magic rod' of divine omnipotence. Having consigned all metaphysical presuppositions to the wind, Al-Ghazali breathes the free air of self-emancipation. It might be conceded, he argues, that natural agents (e.g. fire) are endowed with certain specific properties. It might be conceded too that the same agent operates always in the same manner. We maintain, however, he adds, that the same agent might impinge upon a patient in such wise as to leave it totally unaffected. And that by reason of the intervention of God, either directly or through the agency of the angels, whereby the specific nature of the patient is altered or the specific operation of the patient withheld. Thus fire might seem to touch the body of a prophet⁽⁶⁸⁾ and yet leave it totally uninjured. Similarly the intermediary terms of the causal sequence, which represents the series of conditions culminating in the emergence of a natural effect through-out a given time-process might be abolished; and yet God might still decree that the effect shall

ensue upon the first term of the series and outside the temporal process altogether. The miraculous intervention of God would amount thus to a mere relaxation of the time-process to a minimal degree.--, a circumstance which is not altogether unreasonable; since we can conceive of a progressive shortening of the period in which an event comes to pass, without jeopardy to the actual unfolding of the process culminating in this event. (69)

This assumption is not more unpalatable than the Peripatetic hypothesis according to which quasi-miraculous deeds are attributed to the soul, and notably to the soul of the prophet. The Philosophers teach, in point of fact, that the soul can bring about extraordinary phenomena which are outside the ken of the generality of men, such as rain, lightening and earthquakes, through complicity with the elements. (70) Although this hypothesis is philosophically plausible, it nevertheless suffers one limitation, born of the failure of the Philosophers to rise to a consciousness of the untold wonders of nature and the unsearchable depths of God's creative resources. For whoever catches a glimpse of God's boundless power cannot fail to perceive the complete verisimilitude of prophetic miracles. The Philosophers themselves explain that the various natural processes, like the processes of germination and animal generation, depend upon two conditions:

1. That of the propitious disposition of the elements, and
2. That of the emanation of the specific and appropriate forms from the primary causes, (71) when that emanation has become

seasonable owing to the timely movements of the heavens. Yet by teaching that the determination of the modes and seasons of the impingement of these two factors one upon the other transcends human faculties, the Philosophers open the way for the possibility of the most extraordinary of natural wonders. In fact, the elemental dispositions of things are so mysterious that the adepts of sorcery, alchemy and astrology have achieved well-nigh miraculous deeds, through the crafty manipulation of the elements under the propitious auspices of the stars.⁽⁷²⁾ Thus the mind is naturally led to ask: "Are we warranted in maintaining the impossibility of the propitious dispositions of certain bodies, whereby they are capable of transmutability (from one phase to another) in the shortest conceivable time; so as to become disposed for the reception of a form to which they were not formerly disposed and thus give rise to miracle -, it being granted that the principles of elemental dispositions are inscrutable and their multitudes inexhaustible."⁽⁷³⁾ The hidden secrets of nature and of God's wonders leave ample scope in nature, therefore, for the admission of the possibility of the most miraculous phenomena the depths of which our limited consciousness is incapable of fathoming. To call the rational possibility of miracle into question, therefore, is nothing short of sheer obscurantism.⁽⁷⁴⁾

Here it will be noticed, Al-Ghazali lapses, once more, into his initial position of partial agnosticism, professing thereby to save the conclusive reality of miracle. By casting

upon the natural process the cloak of mystery, he professes to give a rational account of the surreptitious and miraculous incursion of the Divinity into the domain of nature. The 'rationalization' of miracle has thus been achieved through a singular paradox:- The quest of the rational grounds of miracle in the dark recesses of the abyss of irrationality!

Chapter Two.

The Occasionalism of Al-Ghazali in its
Historical Context.

I
Preliminary Remarks.

Our analysis of Al-Ghazali's doctrine of causality and his motives in repudiating the alleged necessity of the causal nexus has revealed the three major movements in the development of his thesis; namely, the absolute sovereignty and omnipotence of God; the contingency of the ontological order; and the validity of the category of necessity in the realm of logical relations of 'conditional relationality'. That Al-Ghazali, in grappling with this grave metaphysical issue, has shown a unique acuteness of mind and a remarkable ability to dispose of the data of the problem with complete mastery can scarcely be gainsayed. It is true that Al-Ghazali's success in reconciling the antithetic conflicts involved in the antinomy of deterministic and divine power has been achieved at the cost of the 'integrity of the cosmic order' - and the unity of its ontological life. Yet such a defect is the natural outcome of the inadequacy of the material of which Al-Ghazali's solution represents the synthesis, rather than of any radical inconsequence vitiating the dialectical movement of his thought. His dialectic acumen, in fact, is nowhere displayed as fully and as masterly as it is in this very freedom and rhythm with which his mind moves in the orbit of this absolute divine sovereignty which has devoured every thing. Like the eagle soaring aloft in 'airless space', his mind

encounters no resistance because it has dissolved all multiplicity and all being in the unity of the unique and Absolute Being. Here is a striking instance of the dialectical stringency with which the metaphysic of oneness can be so artfully woven into a seamless fabric, wherein perfect consistency has been achieved at the cost of adequacy.

Once the acuteness of Al-Ghazali and his ingeniousness in handling his material are admitted, the issue regarding his doctrinal debt to his historical forbears can be settled in a fair way. It is our purpose in the present chapter to determine Al-Ghazali's specific debt to the outstanding representatives of traditional Kalam, in general, and the Ash'arite school, in particular. Because it is only in this manner that the historic significance of the problem at issue can be brought out and the unique contribution of Al-Ghazali to its settlement properly assessed. Likewise a final critique of Al-Ghazali's doctrine of causality and of the metaphysical framework in which it is conceived can be adequately undertaken only in the perspective of the intellectual heritage to which it is historically affiliated.

It has become patent by now that the metaphysical system of Al-Ghazali falls in line with the great metaphysical heritage of the Ash'arite school. Of course, an exhaustive account of the debt of Al-Ghazali to Ash'arism would have to show the extent of his docility in accepting the corpus of Ash'arite doctrine as well as his departure from the doctrinal path traced by his spiritual forbears. As far as I know such a task has not been undertaken. Nor is it my



design in this short survey to accomplish such a task, howevermuch it might contribute to the understanding of the doctrinal history of Islam and the specific genius of Al-Ghazali in it. To those, who, discoursing at length on Al-Ghazali's rebellion against traditional Kalam⁽¹⁾, are led to counsel moderation in any endeavour to reduce so outstanding a thinker to a mere name in a register of historic names, I content myself with remarking: Indeed there is no genius whose thought and whose life are achieved in the pure vacuity of a trans-historic process and no rebel whose insurrection against the thralldom of the past is without remorse.

Whatever the extent of the affiliation of Al-Ghazali to Ash'arism in other directions, his debt to Ash'a-rite Kalam as regards our main theme is immense. The absolute sovereignty and omnipotence of God, the contingency of the ontological order, and with it the causal nexus; the notion of necessary 'conditional relationality' - are among the grand themes of Ash'arism which are taken over almost integrally by Al-Ghazali, as the present chapter proposes to show.

II

Divine Sovereignty and Omnipotence in Ash'ari^{te} Kalam.

The grand theme around which the whole of Muslim theology revolves, like celestial galaxies around their stellar center, is the theme of the absolute uniqueness of God. What sets Islam apart from paganism, (~~widantiyab~~), Judaism and Christianity is this very



affirmation of the irreducible, absolute and quasi-incomprehensible unity of God. The orthodox profession of Islam, in fact, contains no other article of faith save this primordial admission of divine unity.⁽²⁾ The Muslim believer like the Muslim theologian is obsessed by no other thought save this sovereign vision of divine, transcendent unity, the confession of which is the sole pre-requisite of salvation. Whatever threatens to impair the purity of this vision is waived contemptuously aside as polytheism and impiety. (Shirk or Ishrak)

In their apologetic controversies with pagans or with christians the Muslim theologians have no other pre-occupation save the vindication of this unity against any doctrine which savours, however remotely, of polytheism. It is as though they are in the grips of an infernal nightmare which threatens to choke the breath of life in their breasts, of a positive dread lest this unity should be gainsayed and therefore jeopardized. Commenting on Muhammed's failure to perceive the incoherence of his Koranic teaching, Schmolders writes: "Une seule pensée s'était emparée de son âme, une pensée grande et sublime, il est vrai, mais qui dans un esprit ardent comme le sien, devait bientôt tourner en fanatisme. Cette pensée, c'était l'unité d'un Dieu invisible. Il n'y a qu'un dieu et moi je suis son prophète - voilà l'Islam entier. Aucune religion peut-être n'a eu des dogmes si peu nombreux et si simples à la fois, aucun n'a promis le ciel à si bas prix que la sienne; car vous seriez heureux, pourvu que vous professiez ces deux dogmes; vous serez heureux pourvu que vous vous rangiez sous le drapeau glorieux qui ralliera tous les peuples."⁽³⁾

This absolute and irreducible uniqueness of God commended itself to the primitive mind of the Arabs of the Seventh Century that they subscribed to it with utter docility. Yet no sooner the penury of this impoverished notion of the God-Despot began to impinge on the other aspects of Muslim thought and life than the liberal minds began to question this usurpation by the Deity of all the predicates of being and activity. For such a notion had stripped the creature of its subsistence and despoiled man of his legitimate title for self-determination. The theological school which was destined to lead the rebellion against this despotic notion of the Deity was the Mu'tazilite school. The Koran, in vindicating this absolute sovereignty of God, had dissolved the reality of everything else and subjected it to the arbitrary and tyrannical will of the Almighty. Face-to-face with the Almighty the creature had no rights and no prerogatives, or any efficacy for self-fulfillment. To counterbalance this notion of arbitrary Fiat, the Mu'tazilah introduced two novel limitative principles:

1. The principle of divine righteousness and the rationality of divine Providence.

2. The reality and self-subsistence of the creature and its capacity for effective self-determination.

To establish the first principle, the Mu'tazilah had to subsume the notion of divine power to the notion of divine wisdom. God does not act capriciously and despotically; rather does He act in accordance with the precepts of prudence and justice in whatever He executes in the order of His all-embracing Providence. Neither

pre-destination nor tyranny are, therefore, compatible with the notion of the righteous God. The All-wise Creator disposes all things in order and in measure and has left upon all things the impress of His wisdom and His righteousness. (4)

It is important to note, in this context, a very significant corollary of this doctrine of "rational divine providence". We have seen (5) how Al-Ghazali disposes summarily of the illicit predication of justice and injustice of the omnipotent Creator, whose will can be subordinated to no other will and whose dominion can infringe no other dominion. We have also seen how Al-Ghazali levels the charge of blasphemy on the Mu'tazilites for subjecting God to a law of Reason, in the name of His justice and wisdom. It is, of course, strange to find Al-Ghazali and the Ash'arite school in general reject so uncompromisingly the implications of divine justice and wisdom, in their repercussion on the providential ordering of the creation, when they were so zealous in defending the majestic sovereignty and perfection of the Divine Being. The significance of this rejection, when viewed in its ethical perspective, is that it culminates necessarily in the notion of a contingent ethical doctrine which, in perfect consequence with the notion of arbitrary divine Fiat, finds the ground of obligation in the sheer injunction of the Almighty. When the ethical thinker enquires into the grounds of moral duty and the ultimate justification of the Ought, he cannot in the framework of this contingent ethical teaching, lay down as an irreducible ethical postulate: 'It inheres in the nature of the Good, as such, that it ought-to-be.' Nor

can he set up Reason as legislator in the moral sphere, by virtue of the intrinsic rationality of the Idea of the Good and the Sovereign legitimacy of its Ought-to-be, for such would impair the sovereignty of the unique moral legislator and the absoluteness of His dominion.

The contingency of the ethical order is of course on par with the Ash'arite doctrine of a contingent ontological order. That is why the elaboration of this ethical doctrine deserves to be attended to here. According to Shahrastani, (6) "It is a tenet of orthodoxy that reason cannot determine what is good or evil...For men's actions are not intrinsically good or base in such wise that they earn God's reward or punishment in fulfilling the former and refraining from the latter. The good is what the revealed law (as-shar') commends, the bad what it prohibits." (7) To demonstrate this assertion we have only to consider the compelling nature of knowledge pertaining to the speculative order, as against moral maxims whose validity is relative and whose scope is limited. (8) The appeal to a 'natural code of ethics' whereby men do the honourable and shun the dishonourable is no conclusive evidence for the absoluteness of moral principles, either because it is with a view to social praise that men conform their conduct to this code of ethics, and out of fear of social censure that they refrain from doing the dishonourable and the vile. (9)

The Mutazilah, in fact, in perfect consequence with their notion of the paramountcy of the concept of 'wisdom', in divine and human activity alike, preached that goodness is intrinsic to the act itself; so that unaided reason is capable of discovering the

grounds of the rational justification of the Ought, prior to the revealed commandments of the law. ⁽¹⁰⁾ In proof of this the Mu'tazilah argued, through/ a process of 'reductio ad absurdum', that reason was indispensable for the explication of the contents of the law, as well as the discrimination between acts of a controversial moral character. To banish reason altogether from the moral sphere would amount to banishing the law itself. "For if we abolish the (rational) categories of good and evil from human acts and refer them to the mere commandments of the law, then the rational principles which we deduce from the fundamentals of the law would be invalidated; so that it would ^{be} impossible to compare acts of views and to determine the why and the wherefore thereof -, inasmuch as no rationality inheres in subjects (Dhawāt) and no specific properties attach to their acts in such a way that a controversial precept might be referred to it or compared therewith. This would amount to a total abolition of the law with respect to its affirmation and of the religious precepts with respect to their acceptance." ⁽¹¹⁾

The teaching of the Philosophers on this question, Shahrastani further explains, consists in showing that goodness has its grounds in the Idea of the Good. According to them, it is a postulate of reason that "Being is divisible into absolute goodness, absolute evil and a category of good and evil combined." ⁽¹²⁾ It is likewise a postulate of reason that the intellect desires the absolute good and shuns the absolute evil for their own sake, regardless of whether they are enjoined or prohibited by the lawgiver or not. For the soul attains to a state of likeness to God and perfects its practical and speculative faculties, only by conforming itself to

this ethical postulate. The role that the law plays in this process of self-fulfillment and self-perfection is to confirm the assertions of reason rather than to abrogate them, and to minister to the natural incapacity of the generality of men to arrive at the knowledge of the necessary principles of ethical obligation. (13)

In its polemic against the Mu'tazilah and the Philosophers, the Ash'arite school re-affirms the absoluteness of God's arbitrary Fiat, as the sole ground of the moral law. Unlike speculative principles, ethical maxims have no conclusiveness about them, as we have already seen. They derive their authoritative character from the pragmatic consideration of the social praise or reproach that their fulfillment or their contravention would entail. Yet the only consideration that matters with respect to the validity of these moral maxims is God's own verdict. This divine verdict is conditional upon God's own will as revealed to man and not upon the intrinsic goodness or vileness of deeds considered in themselves. Moral obligation, therefore, is not only conditional upon the commandments of the law but is historically co-eval with it; so that divine judgement can have regard only to the explicit injunctions of the law. (14)

And yet ethical rationalism, exasperated with this notion of a gratuitous ethical doctrine, instead of surrendering the enquiry into the rational grounds of obligation, turns finally to divine wisdom, as the ultimate foundation of the moral law. Even if man's title to legislate morally is disputed, and even if the authority of reason to arbitrate in moral conflicts is repudiated, ^{too} might it

not be that the Sovereign ethical, Legislator and Judge Himself legislates and arbitrates in accordance with the dictates of His sovereign wisdom?

It will be recalled here how natural is the disposition of human reason to call into account the Divinity Himself, bidding him submit a rational justification of the designs of His Providence in the name of an absolute law of justice to which the Almighty Himself is compelled to submit. For Ash'arism and Al-Ghazali, however, such a disposition is nothing short of blasphemy. We realize at this point how consequent the Ash'arite theologians are in reducing the moral law to the expression of the sheer Fiat of the Almighty; and how the notion of injustice, as Al-Ghazali keenly perceived,⁽¹⁵⁾ can have no other meaning in this perspective than insurrection against the will of a superior or the infringement of the domain of another. For thus, God who stands at the summit of Creation and whose dominion extends to the outermost reaches of space, can be brought to account before no judgment-seat. To Him alone is it given to exact judgment and to administer justice; but of Him neither justice nor righteousness can be exacted, since above His dominion there is no dominion.

The appeal to the authority of reason as presiding over the providential designs of the Almighty is, therefore, of no avail. Indeed, the foremost predicate of God is power and might, a power which extends to the uttermost limits of possibility, even where injustice itself is involved.⁽¹⁶⁾ "We believe", writes Al-Ash'ari in a passage too classical not to be quoted here in full, "that

(17)

God created everything by bidding it 'Be'...; that nothing on earth, whether a fortune or a misfortune, comes to be, but God has willed it; that things exist by God's fiat; that none can perform an act prior to its performance, or dispense with God or elude His knowledge...; that there is no creator save God; and that the deeds of the creatures are created by Him and predestined by Him, as it is written: 'He created you and your deeds'. That the creatures can create nothing but are rather created themselves... That God has pleased to give it to the pious to obey Him, through His grace, His care, His reform and His guidance; as He has pleased to delude (adhallah) the impious by refraining from guiding them graciously...; That God could reform the impious and convert them unto godliness, but for his foreordination that they shall be impious as He foreknew, leading them thus to perdition and blindness. (We believe) that good and evil are the outcome of God's decree and fore-ordination and we profess faith in God's decree and fore-ordination (Kada' wa Qadar): good or evil, auspicious or ominous, and know that what has failed to attain us would not have attained us and what has befallen us would not have failed to attain us, and that creatures do not have it in their power to benefit or injure themselves,

(18)

save through God". In his polemic against the Mu'tazilah, Al-Ash'ari expounds at great length the logical absurdities involved in any preposterous limitation of the scope of divine power in the disposition of His providence and the fulfillment of His arbitrary decrees. (19)

No wonder he can find no other ground for obligation (20) save the divine fiat. In demonstrating this cardinal thesis, the Ash'arite doctors, following in the steps of themaster,

repudiate the notion of goodness as intrinsic to the moral act, or as an absolute category predicable of Being as such, as we have already seen. (21) Goodness can only mean, upon examination, conformity with the injunctions of a sovereign-absolute goodness conformity with the injunctions of the Absolute Sovereign. The contention that wisdom is the ultimate ground of God's exacting obedience and dispensing justice, argues Shahrastani, in a manner altogether similar to that of Al-Ghazali's, does not avail in assigning a rational justification of the Ought. For according to us, he writes, "wisdom is the occurrence of the event in accordance with knowledge, abstraction being made of interest or utility ensuing thereupon." (22) Such a conception of wisdom is clearly irrelevant to the validity of the ought; as is indeed the consequential consideration of an 'ulterior motive' underlying all divine activity. For is it not legitimate to ask here: 'What motive can the Almighty have in enjoining obedience? And what profit can accrue to Him in the very creation of the universe?' If it is answered: (The good of the creature or the remuneration of gratitude', then one might ask: 'But what secure good does the moral adventure upon which the creature is launched yield, when his destiny might issue in eternal damnation; and what positive gain does gratitude bring unto the self-sufficient Creator"? (23)

The problem of a rational justification of moral obligation is thus seen to involve a metaphysical problem of great moment: the problem of a rational justification of the very act of creation; In the face of the persistent claims of rationalism one might candidly

ask: 'Can a reason be assigned to the primordial movement of the creative will of God?'

It is significant to note that the Mu'tazilah gave an affirmative retort to this question; God created the universe, they said, for the manifestation of His uniqueness, through the signs of visible things and thereby the acknowledgment of His Godhead. (24) In rebutting this argument, the Ash'arites urged that we have only to consider the fragmentariness and the insecurity of the creatures' consciousness of God, to realize how precarious and unavailing is the fulfillment of this alleged purpose of the Creator. (25) God's might, says Al-Baghdadi, one of the leading Ash'arite authors, is boundless and the decrees of His providence irrevocable. (26) His wisdom is so indissolubly bound up with His creative might "that whatever He creates, He creates wisely. Were He to refrain from creating the universe altogether... to create the ungodly without the godly, or the godly without the ungodly; or to create the inanimate without the animate, the animate without the inanimate He would be acting in accordance with the precepts of righteousness, justice and wisdom." (27) It is natural in the perspective of this theory of unmitigated divine omnipotence that the destiny of the creature should be wholly surrendered to God. For moral obligation, with which this destiny is bound up, consists in mere conformity to the commands of the law, as we have already seen in Ash'ari and Shahrastani. Whatever the law enjoins is morally laudable, whatever it prohibits morally reprehensible. Prior to such an injunction or a prohibition, moral responsibility and guilt are

meaningless. Reason can furnish no justification of moral duty, whether prescriptively or selectively; for this is the prerogative of God, with whom alone it rests to determine the season and the contents of the law, in accordance with His sheer pleasure. (28)

The question of God's gratuitous fiat in enjoining moral precepts is tied up in the Mu'tazilite-Ash'arite controversies with the question of divine judgment and chastisement, as the passage quoted below shows. The absolute arbitrariness of God in dispensing justice is nowhere revealed more strikingly than in the Ash'arite contention that God can inflict suffering on the innocent, without jeopardy to His justice. (29) We have seen how outspoken Al-Ghazali is in the vindication of this thesis against the Mu'tazilah. (30) Witness here Al-Baghdadi's account of God's gratuitous dispensation of punishment and reward. Having shown that punishment and reward are contemporaneous with the predication of the law, he proceeds to show that man's discernment of God's existence and unity through unaided reason, prior to the predication of the law (Qabl wurud ish-shar'), entails no necessary reward; that, on the other hand, in the event of failure to arrive at a demonstrative knowledge of God - though undeserving of punishment, - God might, if He so wishes, consign him to eternal damnation; as he can indeed freely chastise the infants and the innocent. (31)

The Ash'arite reduction of the notion of moral responsibility and guilt to sheer conformity to the injunctions of the law is the natural consequence of their ethical determinism. For an agent whose moral activity is woven into the texture of divine power and fore-ordination can be said to be a bearer of responsibility

and guilt only within the orbit circumscribed around his moral being by the sovereign decrees of the Almighty. And yet even here his moral integrity as a responsible agent is not altogether safeguarded. The notion of moral responsibility, when rationalized to its depths, is found to be the condition, rather than the consequent or the concomitant, of conformity to the moral law, whatever its source and justification. Any ethical doctrine which proclaims, in the manner of Ash'arism, that responsibility is coeval with a historic revelation of the commands of the law threatens to nullify the meaning of responsibility and morality alike. The category of human responsibility with which the reality of freedom and duty is bound up, is in fact the most primordial, moral category - a category which is independent of the will of the Almighty or of the positive contents of the moral law. It is true that an adequate conception of morality must concede that responsibility is inconceivable save in the perspective of a personalistic metaphysics -, a metaphysic, that is to say, which places the moral agent face-to-face with a sovereign Person in whose gratification the fulfillment of the moral Ought acquires ethical significance. But the gratification of this sovereign Person is itself conditional upon the free response of a responsible agent. Man is not responsible because he fulfills the moral Ought. For the moral Ought has no meaning unless responsibility is pre-supposed as the quality of a free agent who submits to the moral Ought or violates it freely and nihilistically, and thus consents to load himself with responsibility and guilt. Responsibility is, in the last analysis

therefore, a constitutive element of man's entitative being, of his actual being as man - rather than an element of his finished ethical actuality. For responsibility, ~~or~~ sensibility to the positive imperatives of the Ought, lies on this side of finished ethical actuality. In this respect it is not unlike aesthetic, or even noetic, sensibility. For noetic, aesthetic and moral values alike there is an elemental condition of ontological actuality grounded in the actual structure of man. If this structure is not presupposed, these values are found to forfeit their axiological meaning because they have been cut off from the ontological center in which they are rooted -, I mean, the actually constituted consciousness of the personal bearer of whom they are predicable.

We cannot, of course, elaborate this point any further here. The upshot of the whole question at issue is that Ash'arite, moral occasionalism rests upon a false conception of responsibility which threatens to nullify the meaning of morality altogether. By its identification of the two logically distinct planes of responsibility and obligation, it fails to perceive the irreducible priority of responsibility without which obligation becomes meaningless. And as it cannot assign any rational justification to the validity of the Ought, it commits the further guilt of identifying the Ought, in its inexhaustible wealth, with the arbitrary decrees of a capricious legislator. Here it not only hits the very heart of ethics, by reducing it to pure legalism and pharisaism; it even hits the Almighty in the boundlessness of His will, which it professes to read in the promulgations of a primitive ethical code.

The Ash'arite nullification of moral responsibility can be verified from another direction: and that the direction of moral freedom. Ethical philosophers of the most conflicting schools of thought seem to concur in this: that the fate of moral responsibility is bound up with the fate of moral freedom. An ethical theory in which freedom has no place can scarcely leave scope for responsibility and with it of the very notion of moral obligation.

III

Ethical Determinism and Human Freedom.

The Mu'tazilah invoke a second principle, as we have seen, in their polemic against the Ash'arite doctrine of unmitigated divine Sovereignty. This is the reality and subsistence of the creature and its capacity for self-determination. It is well-known how the Mu'tazilah figure in the history of Islam as the advocates of free-will, in the name of divine justice. Their fanaticism in upholding free-will against the thoroughgoing fatalism of the Ash'arites is nowhere brought out more vividly than in their hyperbolical notion of man as the 'creator of his deeds' - ⁽³²⁾, which aroused the staunchest opposition among Ash'arite doctors as tantamount to polytheism. We have already quoted Ash'ari's inveterate polemic against this Mu'tazilite blasphemous teaching in his statement of the Orthodox creed in Ibahah. Witness how lustily he re-iterates the word 'creator' as the exclusive predicate of God in that classical passage. "We believe", he writes, "that there is no Creator save God and that

man's deeds are created and fore-ordained by Him as it is said (in Scripture): 'He created you and your deeds'... 'They create nothing but He alone creates',... and 'Is He who creates like unto him who does not'; and 'Have they been created from naught or are they the creators'." (33)

The same note is sounded by practically all Ash'arite doctors in their polemic against the Mu'tazilite doctrine of self-determination. (34) Al-Ghazali himself strikes this note throughout his ethical writings. Discoursing on God's fore-ordination (the word is creation) of man's decisions, his deeds and even his repentance, he writes: "Knowledge, repentance, acting and willing, activity and the agent (al-Qudrah wal-Qādir) all is of God's creation and doing. For 'He has created you and your deeds'". (35) (Koran:2-)

From the standpoint of the major theme with which we are concerned, this absorption of the dynamic efficacy of the self-determined agent by divine might is another instance of the Ash'arite repudiation of the reality and subsistence of the Creature. The apparent dynamism of cosmic life, even in its supreme manifestation as exhibited in the phenomenon of human self-determination, is represented as the unilateral procession of the divine will and the divine might. Yet, when it has been conceded that this procession, this movement of cosmic life, has its initial starting-point in the spontaneous fiat of the Almighty, the mind is led naturally to ask: "Whither this dynamic current of divine activity, welling out imperiously from the bosom of God?" For the mind cannot rest in a hypothesis of random dialectical,

self-unfoldment of the divine Essence whose principle and whose term is the sheer dynamism of the Almighty,- a hypothesis according to which the Almighty is engaged in a purposeless and a senseless game of outgoing 'vagabondage' on the wings of cosmic space. If this divine movement is to have any meaning, there must exist somewhere in the cosmic order a center towards which divine activity gravitates -, a real entity upon which the unilateral movement of the divine will impinges. Otherwise the solitude of the Divine Being would be stifling, and the divine inner life hollow and unchallenging like a grave. We shall see later that in this dialectic of divine self-unfoldment there inheres a twofold necessity grounded in the reality of divine love; the necessity of filial companionship and that of subsisting otherness.

It is this inexorable dialectic which has driven rationalism, in general, to set up the creature in the face of the Creator, as a center of dynamic activity. The Mu'tazilah's position on this point, as we have seen, confirms the general principle. Even the Ash'arite school, engaged as it was in a dual polemic against human and divine determinism (Qadariyyah and Jabriyyah), found itself led to assign a positive share in activity to the human agent, in the form of acquisition (Kasb). Yet this concession is found upon closer scrutiny, to represent no real safeguard of human freedom. In their attack on ^othroughgoing ethical determinism (whether impersonalistic fatalism or theistic predestinationism), the Ash'arites remain metaphysically committed to a position of qualified ethical determinism. It is the contention of this essay that the Ash'arite metaphysics, in its bearing on the problem of

God-man relationship, is irreconcilable with any theory of human efficacy or human freedom. It is significant that thoroughgoing determinism (Jabriyyah) does not seem to have been in great vogue in early Islam, because of the obvious extremeness of its claims. Shahrastani, in fact, cites only one school of complete determinists (Jabriyyah Khalisah), in his Book of Religious and Philosophic Sects-⁽³⁶⁾ that of Jahmiyyah, the followers of Jahm ben Safwan, despite its version of mitigated Jabriyyah and its theory of Kasb, the Ash'arite school took over the significant aspect of the Jabriyyah's teaching in what relates to God's fore-ordination and the creation of man's deeds.

The doctrine of Kasb (Acquisition) can be described as an attempt to find a verbal standpoint from which the imperious activity of the Almighty can be referred to the human agent. That in this process of reference, efficacy is consistently reserved to God is a fundamental tenet of Ash'arism and a necessary corollary of their metaphysic of substance and the inertness of being, as we shall see more fully later.⁽³⁷⁾ The genesis of this nominal theory of freedom is to be found in the empirical perception of a positive distinction between voluntary and involuntary motion. According to Shahrastani, this is how a leading Ash'arite doctor- Abu-Bakr al-Baqilani, explains this question. Man perceives intuitively, (min nafsih), he argues, a necessary distinction between voluntary and involuntary movement. This distinction cannot be ascribed to any differentiae pertaining to the two species of movement, since they are not generically

different,- but rather to a factor super-added thereto (Zalid). Now this superadded factor cannot be said to consist in mere consciousness ('Ilm), because this would amount to an abolition of the distinction. It must therefore be referred to a faculty which has regard to the predicates of Being, rather than to Being per se. The latter, on the admission of the Mu'tazilah themselves, is predicable of God alone, whose power has regard to the universal category of Being per se (Wujud), but not to the predicates of Being which inhere in non-Being according to them. Thus the power of the human agent can be legitimately referred to one aspect (Wajh) of the act; namely that whereby it is differentiated (tatamayyaz) from an involuntary act not falling within its scope. This mode of reference of the act to the will of the human agent is called 'Kasb'; and it is to it that reward of punishment attach where a command of the law is involved. Thus, without prejudice to human volition, a positive distinction is established between the mode of 'reference' (Ta'alluq) of divine power and that of human power. The former by definition is referrable to 'Being per se' in a universal way, whereas the latter is merely referrable to a specific aspect of Being, in a particular way. (38) This in the last analysis, is the ground of the distinction between creation, as the predicate of God and acquisition, as the predicate of man. (39)

We cannot relate here the whole tale of the Mu'tazilite-Ash'arite controversy that raged over this question. Yet there is one pertinent aspect of the problem which we cannot pass unnoticed here; because it is of far-reaching consequence to all Muslim ethical

thought. This is the problem of consciousness in its relation to the phenomenon of self-determination. In criticizing the Ash'arite doctrine of Kasb, the Mu'tazilah urged that the admission of a faculty devoid of efficacy, in the manner already expounded, involves a tacit self-contradiction.⁽⁴⁰⁾ For unless we concede the reality of a human capacity entailing the power for production (Ijad), we find ourselves thrown back on our initial position, and therefore, *up* against the original difficulty from which our investigation was first launched. But with the failure to concede the reality of self-determination is bound up a grave issue; namely, the issue of man's consciousness of self-determination. Whoever, in fact, gainsays the intuitive certainty that the agent has of the positive role he plays in free activity; i.e.: activity issuing forth from his self-determined will,⁽⁴¹⁾ gainsays the conclusive certainty of intuitive knowledge. The infirmity of man's nature and his inability to achieve a total coincidence between what he designs and what he effects, in the world of concrete existence, proves nothing against the intrinsic autonomy of his will and his consciousness of self-determination. For the Ought is intelligible only in the perspective of effective possibility.⁽⁴²⁾

The acuteness of the Mutazilite critique and the gravity of the antinomy with which they are grappling here are obvious. Of course, the Ash'arites, by reason of their contingent ethical doctrine, are unable to perceive the law of necessary concomitance of the Ought and the Can. For them the Ought is not an irreducible

ethical principle, upon which the ethical theorist can base conclusive metaphysical assumptions. Nor does the 'Can' subsist on its own, so that the principles of its intrinsic impingement upon the moral order can be rationally deduced. No wonder, they missed deplorably the peremptoriness and the urgency of the antinomy of the Ought and the manner in which moral postulates impinge upon the ontological sphere. Their solution of this antinomy (if solution it can be called): amounts to a counsel of despair, a handing over to the Almighty of the problem and the solution alike. And yet here, where the Mu'tazilites' ethical insight pierces to the depths of the problem of moral autonomy, a most striking difficulty is displayed to sight: their failure to discern the chasm which separates the problem of 'moral autonomy' and the problem of 'concrete freedom of activity': This failure is symptomatic of the failure of all Muslim Kalam to rise to the plane of conceiving the problem of moral freedom in its proper perspective. There persists, in fact, throughout the whole controversial literature on moral freedom in Ash'arite and Mu'tazilite circles alike, a phenomenal confusion : the confusion between 'moral autonomy' and moral activity; between freedom of the will and freedom of activity. No wonder in the maze of this far-reaching confusion, no prospect of a settlement of the problem of moral freedom was in sight. Indeed, when perusing this controversial literature one is left at a loss to determine which it is really that the Mu'tazilite-Ash'arite controversialists are pre-occupied with. Is it the freedom of the will or the freedom of activity?-

the two of which seem to be woven into each other like the woof and the warp of one garment.

Looking now at the controversy from the altitudes of critical insight achieved through ages of ethical investigation, especially by Kant and Hartmann - in our times, we are perhaps tempted to judge those pioneers too severely. Yet here, at last, there lurked in the horizon a streak of light which the Mu'tazilah failed to pursue to the end. Like Kant, they had perceived the impossibility of divorcing the Ought from the Can. Nevertheless they continued to treat the Ought and the Can as though they belonged to the same order of discourse. The outcome was that their perception of the notion of consciousness of self-determination contributed little to the solution of the problem of actual self-determination and the consequent problem of freedom of activity, with which it was so hopelessly confused. (43)

* * * * *

With this we might turn to Al-Ghazali to see how far he concurs in this theory of nominal self-determination, and how much of the efficacy of the human agent he succeeds in retaining, in his own version of this doctrine of Kasb. The vindication of God's absolute power and fore-ordination, which as we have seen is a concomitant of faith in the uniqueness of God, involves necessarily the pre-supposition that God is the sole agent in all the operations of nature. Whatever comes to pass in the domain of concrete existence must therefore be referred to His will and fore-ordination. Yet the very notion of obligation, underlying the predication of the law (Shar'), rests on a tacit admission of man's

(44)
responsibility and, therefore, of his freedom. How is the moral theorist, then, in the face of these antithetic conflicts between human freedom and divine fore-ordination - to achieve an ethical settlement of the problem in a manner which promised to safeguard the rights of the creature and the rights of the Creator, wherever their respective activities impinge one upon the other?

Pure determinism, he argues, inasmuch as it imputes all activity to God - cannot be entertained because it threatens to sap the foundations of moral duty by nullifying the notion of moral responsibility altogether, and fails to account for the distinction (45) between voluntary and involuntary movement in a satisfactory manner. Any unqualified theory of self-determination which attributes to man the creation of his deeds, in the manner of the Mu'tazilah, ought to be rejected too, because it infringes the prerogative of God, as the sole Creator of everything that is. In fact, when the notion of creation is exposed to critical scrutiny it is found that the predication of creativity to the agent involves a gross error. Any adequate conception of creation must concede the relation of (46) concomitance between creation and consciousness. "For how can the creature be the creator (of his deeds) when he is totally unconscious of the minutes and numbers of the movements" he is (47) said to effect? If these two erroneous positions are discounted, there remains one valid alternative; namely, a 'media via' between determinism and voluntarism, as in the doctrine of Kasb. (48)

Like his Ash'arite masters Al-Ghazali has, in this 'via media', saved only the semblance of self-determination. Once more he is

haunted by the vision of the exclusive divine prerogative of creative might. It is true he persists in maintaining that no contradiction inheres in the dual affirmation of divine power and human responsibility, even when it is asserted that choice itself is created by God. It is true too that he is fully alive to the ethical antinomy which threatens to cleave ethics and theology in twain, by creating a yawning chasm between God and man which ethics cannot bridge. With him as with the Ash'arites, moral responsibility is reduced to a mere mode of reference (ta'alluq) of divine activity to the human subject. There are in activity, he explains, two distinct series of determinational conditions: 1. a series pertaining to the inward movement of consciousness, and 2. a series pertaining to the outward movement of mechanistic activity. In neither of these series is the alleged reality of spontaneous self-determination theoretically warranted. The first series has its terminal issue in the verdict of the intellect (hukmul-'aql) which is (50) determined by the finalistic necessity of the Good, as morally imperative. There are, in fact, here four links in the chain of conditions leading to resolve: Judgment, Volition, Power, Movement, which stand one to another in a position of necessary, conditional relatedness. The absence of any term in this series holds the process of outward activity in abeyance. Inasmuch as the first term of the series (Judgment) depends on the perception of the good, as the finalistic determinant of the will, it is seen how inexorable (51) is the cycle of ethical determinism. The human agent, therefore, is even determined in choosing (majbur 'alal-Iktiyar). The only

role he plays in this whole drama is that of 'nodal center', the 'supposition' of a process enacted through him, without his participation in it or his consciousness of its unfoldment within him. (52)

With regard to the outward movement of activity (fi'l), too, man's freedom is inextricably woven into a texture of conditions culminating in the spontaneity of the divine will. When the concept of activity (fi'l) is critically examined, it is found to be predicable of man only figuratively. "Activity, as regards man" - Al-Ghazali writes, "has a threefold connotation, as when it is said: man writes with his fingers, breathes through his lungs and pierces the surface of water when standing on it... These three acts are, in fact, synonymous with compulsion; except that they differ, among themselves in certain respects... Thus they can be called: natural, autonomous and voluntary acts", (53) Now constraint (Jabr) is patent in natural and autonomous activity, but not in voluntary activity. Yet upon close scrutiny it is seen that in this mode of activity there inheres a necessary finalistic determinism having its seat in consciousness. The series of conditions involved in resolve, as we have seen, are conditionally related so that "movement is posited necessarily when power is posited, power when resolve is posited and resolve transpires necessarily in the heart". (54)

If we consider human self-determination from another standpoint, we find that the pre-supposition of the spontaneity of man as the ultimate determinational ground of his moral activity would

involve us in an acute difficulty: the determination of the will volitionally must needs have a determinant which must needs have an anterior determinant, and so on ad infinitum. (55) We have already seen how inexorable is the determinational cycle in which human activity is caught -, a cycle wholly subordinate to the might and fore-ordination of God, Whose providence embraces the boundless sphere of possibility to its outermost limits. (56) In his volitions and in his executions, therefore, the human agent is subject to the imperious determinism of the Almighty.

And yet despite the vindication of this imperious determinism, argues Al-Ghazali, the ethical thinker can save the reality of human self-determination. If it is objected that in this salvation, nothing is gained with regard to the efficacy of the human agent, it might be retorted that such an objection rests on a misconception. The doctrine of acquisition or 'Kasb', it is true, concedes no efficacy to the creature, but only reference (ta'alluq) of the act to him. But this is not the sole instance of a mode of reference of an agent to a patient which carries with it no efficacy, as the opponent claims. Consider, for instance, power in its anticipatory reference to a protracted deed. Clearly the deed does not come about in and through this power, despite its necessary logical reference to it. (57) If it is further objected that such power is identical to powerlessness ('ajz); it would be urged that this claim is irreconcilable with the consciousness of power, as distinct from the consciousness of powerlessness, which accompanies voluntary activity - and is, in effect, a negation of intuitive

certainty. (munakarah lidh-dharurah).

I will pass without censure the verbal quibbling in which this dialectical subtlety involves Al-Ghazali. The precarious ground on which he is treading is obvious. No sooner has he put forth this ingeniously plausible argument than he hastens to explain that "the identity of such a power of the human agent with powerlessness, inasmuch as the effect is not produced through it " can be conceded, provided it is not called powerlessness, since "this is incorrect" (58) Having thus emerged out of the arena of controversy with no visible gain, he relaxes into arm-chair dogmatism, as the way out of this inextricable dilemma. "In sum", he concludes, "there is no other recourse than the affirmation of two dissimilar powers (qudratayn mutafawitatayn): one of which is superior, whereas the other is more like unto powerlessness whenever it is compared to the former. Now it is up to you to choose whether to attribute a power which gives the illusion of impotency in one respect to the agent (al-'abd); or to God... You could not doubt, however, with any fairness, that powerlessness and imperfection are more appropriately predicated of the creature. Nay it ought not to be said 'more' because this is inconceivable with regard to God" (59)

Once more, before the terrifying presence of the Almighty, the human agent must be allowed to wither away.

IV

The Inertness of Substance and the Intransmittability of Accidents.

The Ash'arites' nullification of the reality of human self-

determination is one instance of their total nullification of cosmic dynamism, in the interest of the exclusive, creative dynamism of the Almighty. The second instance is their parallel repudiation of the dynamism of substance as a center of efficient causality. The metaphysical groundwork upon which the Ash'arite doctrine of inertness of substance is built rests on two bases: Occasionalist Atomism and the intransmittability of accidents.

The extraordinary metaphysic of substance which the Ash'arite theologians elaborated with a view to affording a plausible rational groundwork upon which the absolute omnipotence of God (60) can be erected is not without parallel in the history of philosophy. Yet very early in the history of Medieval thought, this curious metaphysical structure roused the suspicion of Aristotelian Philosophers, who set out to expose its inconsequences with unsparing ruthlessness. We have already touched upon the Averroist critique of the Ghazalian version of this occasionalist metaphysics. But Averroes's critique has neither the bitterness nor the sarcasm of his disciple Maimonides, who derides the teaching of the Ash'arite Mutakallims with singular scorn. In the history of this Aristotelian polemic against the Ash'arites, Maimonides assumes a unique position; because it was through his 'Guide' that Thomas Aquinas became acquainted with the teaching of the 'Loquentes' of Islam. The Thomist Critique, which will be taken up at full length later, has the great merit of affording a final refutation of the metaphysics of occasionalist atomism, without any prejudice to the metaphysical and theological interests underlying its

formulation. Thus it stands out as the only positive and thorough critique, because it does complete justice to the acute metaphysical problem with which the Ash'arites were grappling.

Despite Schmölders's admonition, that Maimonides's account of the teachings of the Muslim Mutakallimin (or Medebberim, as he calls them) should not be taken as authoritative, ⁽⁶¹⁾ the latter's brief but thorough exposition of the fundamental tenets of Islamic Kalam is worthy of credence in its main lines. We shall leave aside Maimonides's bitter critique of the Mutakallims' pseudo-proofs of the existence of God from the notion of a created universe. What interests us most in his exposition is his account of the Mutakallims' doctrine of causality and their metaphysics of atoms and accidents. The historic significance of Maimonides, as we have seen, derives from the circumstance that he seems to be the only medium through which Ash'arite occasionalism reached the 13th. Century doctors in the West, and notably: Thomas Aquinas. It is our purpose in this brief survey to see Ash'arite occasionalism through Maimonides's 'Guide of the Perplexed', and thence to retrace the history of this doctrine backward from Aquinas, through Maimonides to the Ash'arite doctors.

Maimonides sums up the teachings of the Mutakallims under twelve propositions, of which props. I, III, IV, V, VIII and IX deal directly with the Ash'arite metaphysics of atoms and accidents with which we are here concerned. ⁽⁶²⁾ In the first proposition, he expounds the atomic theory of the Ash'arites. The universe, the Mutakallims taught, consists of indivisible, homogeneous particles,

devoid of magnitude called 'atoms'. These atoms are continually created by God with whom rests the decree to annihilate them at pleasure. In these two respects these atoms differ from the 'eternal atoms' of Epicurius and the Greek Atomists. As to time (Prop.3), the Mutakallims held, in consequence with their theory of substance, that it too consists of indivisible particles called time-atoms. Locomotion was explained, therefore, as the translation of each atom of the body from one point to the other. That is why the Mutakallims had to affirm the existence of vacuum (Prop. 2). For it is a tenet of their teaching that no atom can penetrate into another. Similarly, the theory of succession of atoms in a discontinuous time made it impossible for the Mutakallims to accept the reality of relative velocities. They, therefore, held that a greater velocity meant simply the intervention of fewer moments of rest. (63)

It is characteristic of each atom (Prop.5) that it is endowed with a set of positive or negative accidents which are described as "elements superadded to the substance" (Prop.4). No material body can be altogether shorn of either positive or negative accidents. Of these accidents some are predicable of all material bodies, others are characteristic of certain genera only. For instance the accident of life inheres only in animate bodies; but in such wise that its existence entails necessarily a series of other accidents, such as wisdom, free will, power, perception or their opposites (64) Prop.4. According to this theory of accidents, categories which are predicable of substance inhere, in fact, in the constituent atoms

and not, as Aristotle taught, in the individual substance. Life, sensation, intellect and wisdom ⁽⁶⁵⁾ are reckoned among the accidents, which inhere either in a distinct atom of the body or in every atom thereof. (Prop.5)

In consonance with their theory of time, the Mutakallims taught that accidents do not endure for two moments of time (Prop.6). When God creates a substance, they argued, he creates therewith the the whole series of accidents characteristic of its genus; for it is impossible for God to create a substance devoid of accidents altogether. But since these accidents cannot endure for two time-atoms, God is said to be continually creating a stream of identical accidents through which the substance in question preserves its identity. ⁽⁶⁶⁾ God, however, can create in the body a different accident, in the second instant, - thus transmuting the body at will -, or even withhold from it all accidents, and thus, depriving it of existence. The process of annihilating a body is said by some Mutakallims to consist in God discontinuing the creation of its accidents; by others, to consist in God creating the accident of destruction in no substratum, thereby annihilating the whole world, ⁽⁶⁷⁾ (Prop.6)

The Mutakallims, Maimonides here remarks, in repudiating the duration of accidents, seek to refer the efficacy of bodies to God alone. That is why they are opposed to the theory that there exists a natural form from which each body derives its peculiar properties. They prefer to assume that God Himself creates these properties ⁽⁶⁸⁾ without the intervention of a natural force or of any other agency"

Like his Peripatetic master, Averroes, Maimonides here exposes the sceptical consequences of this theory. The negation of the specific properties of things amounts to a negation of the possibility of knowledge. The alarming consequence of this abolition of the properties of things is that it militates against the very motive it is designed by the Mutakallims to serve: viz.- the demonstration of the existence and unity of God. For neither from the subsistent reality of created things, nor from the intellect's intrinsic faculty to form ~~accurate~~ judgments about reality, would the prospect of such a demonstration be forthcoming. The contingency of the properties and quiddities of things entails necessarily the arbitrariness of knowledge founded upon them. "For the Mutakallims" Maimonides writes, "do not hold that the universe has any ~~defined~~ defined properties on which a true proof (of God's existence) could be founded, or that man's intellect is endowed with any such faculty as would enable him to form correct conclusions."⁽⁶⁹⁾

Their arbitrary procedure in proving the existence of God is revealed in this gratuitous argument from creation ex nihilo. Without advancing any cogent proof for the non-eternity of the world they argue: "If the universe were created ⁽⁷⁰⁾ God exists; if it were eternal God does not exist; the existence of God would thus remain dubious, unless we presume to have proved the creation of the world in time and proceed to compel others to believe it through sheer force. (lit. by the strength of the sword.)"⁽⁷¹⁾

A further corollary of the Mutakallims' metaphysics of atoms and accidents, Maimonides proceeds, is the negation of any causal efficacy inhering in things. Causality, on the assumptions of the

mutakallims, is neither predicable of animate nor of inanimate agents. With respect to the former, (i.e. man), activity cannot be predicated of his soul, since the soul, as the Ash'arites teach, is an accident ⁽⁷²⁾ which is continually created by God. Whenever man executes a deed, therefore, it is in effect God who is acting through him, by bringing about four successive accidents corresponding to the four phases in activity: "The first accident is man's will to move (the pen), the second is man's power to do so, the third is the bodily motion itself, i.e., the motion of the hand, and the fourth is the motion of the pen." Yet none of these four accidents is causally related to the other; the sole mode of relationship in which they stand one to the other is that of simultaneity or succession. ⁽⁷³⁾ With respect to the latter (viz. the inanimate agent), its operation is likewise referable exclusively to God. In fact any becoming which supervenes upon it must be attributed to God, since the transition of one accident from one substance alleged to operate upon another, as well as the duration of that accident throughout the process of becoming are untenable. ⁽⁷⁴⁾ Accordingly, when a cloth is seen to change colour upon dying, it is inaccurate to say that the red pigment penetrated the cloth; because an accident cannot pass from one object to another. The truth of the matter is that "God created that colour in the cloth when it came into contact with the red pigment." To assume a necessary causal sequence in the process of pigmentation is therefore unwarranted. "God", it is true, "generally acts in such a way that, e.g., the black colour is not created unless the cloth is

brought into contact with indigo; but this blackness which God creates in the instant when the cloth touches the black pigment is of no duration, and another creation of blackness then takes place." (75) The final consequence of this theory, Maimonides writes, is that, "there does not exist any thing to which an action could be ascribed; the real 'agens' is God...In short, most of the Mutakallimim believe that it must never be said that one thing is the cause of another; some of them who assumed causality were (76) blamed for doing so."

Whatever continuity of identity is found to pertain to existing things must therefore be ascribed to the relative constancy of God's ways. Yet this 'constancy' is far from being identical with absolute necessity. It belongs to the spontaneity of the divine will alone to determine whether an event shall follow the course normally assigned to it or to depart from "that direction of habit". The possibility of such departure from the habitual course of nature cannot be discounted by the intellect on any decisive grounds; since the intellect does not perceive the reason for the specific determinations pertaining to any individual object. Thus it is "logically not impossible that a deviation from this habit should occur;" Maimonides puts it in the mouth of the Mutakallims, "namely, that fire should cause cold, move downward and still be fire; that (77) the water should cause heat, move upward and still be water." In the sphere of logical concepts, however, reason concedes a mode of necessary relationality between terms whose disjunction or conjunction violate the principle of Contradiction. Thus reason,

for instance, "admits the impossibility of two opposite properties co-existing at the same time in one substance." Again, reason admits the impossibility of a "substance existing without an accident, or an accident existing without a substance... that a substance should become an accident, that an accident should become a substance or that one substance should penetrate another." (78)

I will content myself here with noting the ridicule which Maimonides heaps on the Mutakallims over this theory of "admissibility", a theory born of a phenomenal confusion of the intellect with the imagination. Whatever their imaginative fancy pronounces as admissible, these Mutakalliks acclaim as logically possible, failing thereby to discern that the categories of necessity and possibility inhere in the generic natures of things rather than in the fanciful representations of the imagination. They fail thus to perceive that the intellect, through analysis and division, arrives at the knowledge of the genera of things upon which all genuine demonstration is founded, and in which the imagination has no positive share. (79)

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No one who reads Maimonides's account of the fundamental teachings of Islamic Kalam can fail to perceive the sting of bitterness which runs through it. Nevertheless, his keenness in discerning the basic principles underlying these teachings and the subtlety of his irony lend his account a dramatic flavour. Inasmuch as his doctrinal position is so markedly different from that of the Mutakallims, both in the religious and philosophic

principles it enshrines, he finds himself under no necessity to distort the theses of the opponent. He has at least the fairness of reporting the facts of the case as adequately as can be expected in a brief exposition like his own. Let us now cast a backward glance on historical Kalam in general, and Ash'arism in particular, to see to what extent it tallies with the exposition of Maimonides and, therefore, to what extent was Thomas Aquinas's picture of the 'Loquentes' and authentic picture.

By the second half of the eleventh century Atomism had become part of the Orthodox creed of Islam, notably in Ash'ari circles. In 'Al-Farq baynal-Firaq', Al-Baghdadi (80) sums up the main theses on which the Orthodox are agreed. The Orthodox are agreed, he writes, "that the component parts of the universe fall into two divisions: substances and accidents...and that every substance consists of an indivisible atom." (81) It was on this account, he relates that an-Nazzam and the Philosophers were declared blasphemous; (Kafirs); because the thesis of the divisibility of the atom and infinitum entails the blasphemous consequence that God's knowledge of the number of existing atoms is not exhaustive - since it is an axiom that the infinite cannot be circumscribed. Even in Ash'ari's time (82) the atomic theory was in great vogue, as can be gathered from his discussion of the theories of 'substance' (or Jawhar), (83) prevalent in his days. He actually relates that the atomic theory (Al-qawl bil-juz'il-ladhi la yatajazza') was definitely upheld by Abul-Hudhail, Al-Jubba'i, Hisham al-Fuwati, Salih Qubba, Abul-Husain as-Salihi, Mu'ammār, Hisham and 'Abbad, whose

names occur in the course of the discussion, can be inferred to have held this theory.⁽⁸⁴⁾ Philosophic speculation had apparently achieved an elaborate metaphysics of 'substance' by this time. Substance (al-jawhar) was defined as "that which subsists in itself and is susceptible of becoming the substratum of opposites"(P.307), or that "which is the substratum of accidents"; The latter being the view of Al-Jubai; who apparently held a Platonic theory according to which "Substances are such in themselves, and can be conceived as substances prior to their existence." (Ibid.) The same Juba'i taught that substances are of the same genus; and although they are like or unlike in themselves, they are not different in reality (P.308). This position might be construed to mean that, though generically identical, substances belong-like Plato's Ideas - to different species. Similarly a measure of doctrinal agreement seems to have been achieved respecting the distinction between 'Body' (Jism) and 'Accident'. Although some authors are reported by Ash'ari to have identified 'body' and 'substance' (P.307 and 301), the common teaching was "that what is predicable of substance (al-Jawhar al-wahid, lit. atom) is not predicable of bodies" (P.311). Here we have, without doubt, the genesis of atomism. The upholders of this theory, Ash'ari relates, held that motion and rest, life and death, colours and tastes, are impredicable of the atom but only of bodies.⁽⁸⁵⁾ A further refinement on this theory is afforded by the position of Hisham al-Fuwati who held that the atom was indistinguishable (or indiscernible)⁽⁸⁶⁾, untouchable and invisible.⁽⁸⁷⁾ We have here

at last a profound discernment of the implications of atomism as taught by the Greek masters. For here, at least, Muslim speculation had risen to the plane of genuine abstraction and established the rational distinction between substance and body, i.e.: between an entity which reason posits as distinct from the perceptible accidents which inhere in it, and an entity which is intelligible only in terms of the 'principle' supporting' conjoined to 'what it supports'. Short of this achievement, Islamic speculation would have remained on the primitive plane of empirical knowledge.

This distinction between 'accident' and 'substance' which is indispensable to any understanding of the rational reality of physical objects seems to have become conclusively enshrined in Islamic philosophic circles by the eleventh century. This is Baghdad's account of the matter. The world which, according to the Orthodox (Aṣḥabuna), he explains, "is everything other than God" ⁽⁸⁸⁾ —, is divisible into two categories: substances and accidents. By substance is meant "everything endowed with colour" (kull/ḥi laawn) ⁽⁸⁹⁾; by accident "the qualities inhering in substances, such as motion, rest, taste, smell, heat, etc." ⁽⁹⁰⁾ Now substance and accident have this in common: that in themselves they are indivisible, the one subsisting in itself as the constituent atom of all bodies, the other inhering in a substratum (mahall). It is a tenet of Orthodoxy, as we have seen, that substances are homogeneous (jins wahid), whereas every accident represents a specific genus (jins Makhsus) ⁽⁹¹⁾ The divisibility of every physical object into an

indivisible atom (juz' la yatajazza') can be demonstrated by a process of 'reductio ad absurdum' of the thesis of infinite dividibility. For this thesis entails two absurd corollaries: that God can have no exhaustive knowledge of the number of such infinite atoms, as we have seen; and second, that the magnitudes of all bodies are equal since the infinite is not greater than the infinite. (918)

The homogeneity of substances raises an important question: what is it that determines the diversity and differences of things? Such, according to the Orthodox Baghdadi explains, can neither be due to any generic differences inhering in them nor to the differences of the elements composing them (as the Philosophers hold) but rather to the diversity of the accidents which supervene upon them. (92) Against those who deny the reality of accidents (93) and "claim that bodies move without a superadded accident of motion and are black without a superadded accident of blackness, it can be urged that the motion of a body subsequently to rest can be due either to its substance ('aynuhu) or to another factor (ma'na) distinct from its substances. But motion cannot be ascribed to the substance, since this is identical in the two successive states of rest and motion; it must, therefore, be ascribable to something else which we call 'accident' (94)

As to the characteristics of these accidents, like the atoms, as we have already seen, they are indivisible. It follows, therefore, that neither composition, nor contact nor transmissibility are predicable of them. (85) Likewise durability, as we shall see, cannot be predicated of accidents. The broadest division into which

accidents can fall is that of 'essential' and 'secondary' accidents. (96)
Essential accidents can be described as the necessary concomitants of substance - so that the existence of a substance devoid of these accidents is inconceivable. To this class belong the 'modi' (or states - kauwmipl.akwan), such as the modus of motion, if the body is in motion or of rest, if it is at rest; colours, smells, tastes, etc. (97)
Secondary accidents, on the other hand, are not so indissolubly bound to substance as essential accidents. Of this class of accidents there is a great multitude, each of which belonging to one genus. It is noteworthy, here, that the heterogeneity of accidents was not left uncontested by Muslim theologians. An-Nazzam, for instance, held that all accidents are reducible in the last analysis to the accident of motion; so that whatever is The motive of an-Nazzam in upholding this theory of motion is a body (jism)⁹⁸. Kinetic materialism seems to have been his desire to safeguard the continuity and identity of substances and their causal efficacy, as is shown by his doctrine of Immanence (99)
(Kumun) and Nature (tab').

We have already had occasion to touch upon the Islamic doctrine of duration and annihilation in the course of discussing Maimonides's account of the Mutakallims' metaphysic of accidents. Having vindicated the intransmittability of accidents, the Ash'arite theologians in particular, and the Mutakallims in general, ^{are} confronted with the problem of the relative subsistence of things and the continuity of their life. The admission of the absolute self-subsistence of concrete things, as we have seen, would amount to an investiture of the creature with the predicates of essential

being, or of 'per se' being. Obsessed as they were with the omnipotence of God and His all-embracing providence, they found such a prospect unthinkable. But even when bodies have been denuded of all the predicates of absolute self-subsistence, it remains that they enjoy a relative degree of subsistence, as sense-experience itself testifies. "Whence do accidents derive this relative subsistence" is therefore a pertinent metaphysical question, which cannot be left out of account altogether. It would seem at first sight that the reality of such a relative subsistence is rationally accounted ^{for} when it is described as the predicate of the substrata in which the accidents inhere; I mean, the atoms constituting the body. But the paradoxical aspect of the matter is that these atoms themselves have no self-subsistence either. Witness here the acute antinomy in which the Ash'arites have involved themselves. They define accidents as "the qualities inhering in substance" - such substances being, on their showing, the indivisible particles or atoms. When they are called upon to account for the subsistence of these atoms, in turn, they declare that they subsist by virtue of the accident of subsistence (baqa') supervening upon them. No sooner have they asserted this than they hasten to repudiate their very thesis by maintaining that accidents have no subsistence either. It is indeed patent that the ground of the duration ^{of} accidents is ultimately what we have described as the 'constancy of God's ways', but this amounts, once more, to a surrendering of the problem of subsistence altogether and a misconception of the already established distinction between

(100)
substance and accident. Can it be said, in this perspective then, that the Ash'arite theologians had achieved a genuine conception of substance: Is it not rather that they have reduced all things to the status of an unintelligible flux of accidents?

Discussing the question of duration of accidents (baqa'), Baghdadadi declares that, despite the controversy which raged around it, the Orthodox (ashabuna) have declared it impossible. (101)
The demonstration of this thesis involves the admission of this logical postulate: viz., the impossibility of any sufficient reason for the extinction of an accident once its existence has been posited. "The affirmation of durability (baqa') of accidents", he writes, "entails the impossibility of their annihilation. For if (the thesis of the Orthodox), - that an accident endures by reason of the supervention of 'duration' upon it, so that it ceases to exist once this 'duration' is withheld from it - is negated, it would follow that (an accident) would endure till an opposite should emerge necessitating thereby its annihilation. But in this manner, there would be no sufficient reason why the necessity of its annihilation through the emergence of its opposite should prevail on the tendency of its Being to resist the emergence of its opposite" - a consequence which militates against the theory of the possibility of accidents and their destructibility and conduces to the impossibility of their ^{being created} creation (Huduth), and therefore the necessity of their eternal subsistence. (102)

(103)
At this stage, the account of Maimonides that atoms do not endure except through God's pleasure can be verified.

Duration, as we have seen, is said to be an accident inhering in a substance, or atom. Inasmuch as substances endure by reason of the accident of duration, and inasmuch as this accident itself - like all other accidents - is incapable of enduring for two instants, it follows that the atoms out of which bodies are constituted can have no durability either. This is how Al-Ash'ari, according to Baghdadadi's authority, argues: "It is imperative that in every substance (jawhar : atom) [the positive accidents] of colour, modus (kaown), smell, etc... should inhere or their opposites. If [a substance] endures throughout two states, it is imperative that durability should exist in it at every successive phase subsequent to its coming-to-be."⁽¹⁰⁴⁾

Perhaps the most fantastic teaching of Islamic Kalam is the theory of extinction or annihilation (fana'). Al-Qalanisi is reported to have described extinction as an accident supervening upon the annihilated body, whereby it ceases to exist in the "second instant",⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ The Ash'ari, on the other hand, seems to have held a more sober position; namely, "that the extinction of a body comes about through God's refraining from recreating duration in it; whereupon the accident ceases-to-be instantaneously,⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ owing to the impossibility of its duration." Despite its inconsistency with the Ash'arite claim that extinction and death are to be reckoned among the accidents,⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ this theory has the merit of perceiving at least on this point that Not-Being is a mere privation, rather than a positive entity. We must finally note here the thesis of the Jubali and abu-Hashim on the question of extinction. These two Mu'tazilite doctors are reported to have

taught that extinction is an accident which God creates in no substratum, and thereby destroys all things. In consequence of this position, they held that God cannot destroy certain things and leave the rest undestroyed. (108) This theory was dismissed by the Ash'arite doctors as blasphemous precisely on the latter score, (109) since it amounted in fact to a limitation on God's power.

* * * * *

The Metaphysics of accidents outlined above was thus accepted by the two major sects of Islamic speculative theology: The Ash'ariyyah and the Mu'tazilah. The ethical pre-suppositions of Mu'tazilism and its desire to safeguard the reality of human self-determination led the Mu'tazilite doctors to formulate a theory which promised to restore to the cosmic order its continuity and integrity. And this theory took the form of a doctrine of causal efficacy, according to which an agent can be said to 'generate' an effect capable of transmission beyond him. This is known as the doctrine of Tawallud (generation or production) - designed to safeguard the imputability to the human agent of his deeds and transgressions. Otherwise, they held, there would be no sense in the affirmation of human freedom or of divine justice.. Baghdadi's account of generation brings out this aspect of the problem quite vividly. (110) "The Qadarites", he writes, "held that man might effect a deed in himself upon which might ensue (yatawalladu 'anhu) a deed in another of which he would be the doer, as he is of its cause in himself." Al-Ash'ari gives a lengthy account of this teaching and the problems it raised in theological circles. He attributes it in its diverse aspects to Bishr b. al-Mu'tamin,

Mu'ammār, an-Nazzām, Jahīz, Ṣalīḥ Qubbāh, Abul-Hudhail, etc. (111)

The latter is reported to have added to the theory the significant notion of 'accompanying consciousness' (112) In consonance with this notion, Abul-Hudhail urged against Bishr that the accidents produced in another by an agent are not of his own doing, but of God's, since he is unconscious of their consequence in the patient. (113) Only inward activity is imputable of the agent, its consequences fall outside the sphere of his consciousness and, therefore, of his foreordination. It is difficult to reconcile this theory with Abul-Hudhail's avowed admission of freedom and responsibility; but here is an instance of false metaphysical presuppositions vitiating genuine ethical considerations. In this as in the teaching of Ṣalīḥ Qubbāh we have, anyway, a compromise between human and divine activity. The paradoxical aspect of the matter is that Ṣalīḥ, having admitted generation in principles, surrenders it readily on behalf of divine activity. For it is not necessary according to him that a natural agent should produce its determinate effect or that conditions be related to each other in accordance with any necessary logical pattern. God might, on this hypothesis, create in man the consciousness of pleasure while in the throes of the acutest misery, and enable him to experience any sensation without its accompanying circumstances. (114)

Mu'ammār is reported to have held a theory, not altogether different from that of an-Nazzām, according to which all extrinsic activity (like motion or rest) is impredicable of man; so that man is incapable of effecting any movement or deed in external bodies. (115) Generation, therefore, is the mode of the body's own manifestation of its immanent qualities. (116) An-Nazzām's own teaching on this

question is of extreme historical interest. His doctrine of immanence (Kumun) rested on a metaphysic of Kinetic Materialism. Like Epicurus, Demon^ritus and Hobbes he taught that everything is reducible in the end into matter in motion. Whatever is not body is motion. (117) Accidents, like tastes, sounds, smells, etc. are "minute bodies" (ajsam latifah); (118) the only real accident being motion. To the latter class belong all modes of change. Volition, (119) consciousness and activity are generically reducible to motion. Even man's soul (ar-Ruh) is a "minute particle" commixed with his body." (120) This 'ruh' is the 'real man' and is alone endowed with life, power and volition. Yet, and here he joins hands with Mu'ammār, this ruh cannot effect anything in the external world, (121) since it is an axiom that man cannot create bodies. Whatever comes to pass outside the inward sphere of human volition is, therefore, of God's own doing, albeit not in the occasionalist manner proposed later by the Ash'arites. Here the issue between immanence and occasionalism is brought out with striking vividness. In contradistinction to the Ash'arite Theistic Occasionalism, an-Nazzam's position might be described as Deistic Determinism. The emergence of an event in nature is neither the direct outcome of human nor of divine intervention. Man, as we have seen, acts only in the inward world of consciousness and will. That emergence is the unfolding of the hidden powers of the natural body, unleashing themselves in accordance with the law which God has implanted in it. (122) Here, without doubt, we have the absolute antithesis (taba'a) of Ash'arite Occasionalism: God effects nothing

in the cosmic sphere outside the determined order he has fore-ordained since all eternity.

As is natural for a theory which was proposed precisely with a view to safeguarding the natural efficacy of things, causality went hand in hand with the Mu'tazilite theory of generation.

According to Ash'ari, the majority of the Mu'tazilah who admitted generation held that "causes posit their effects necessarily." (123)

Only Al-Juhai, Ash'ari adds, departs from the generality of Mu'tazilite doctors teaching that a cause cannot posit its effect necessarily, since this is the prerogative of its author or producer. (124)

Neither 'generation' nor causality, however, could be reconciled with the ultimate presuppositions of the Ash'arite metaphysics. Both the ethical principles they were designed to safeguard, and the metaphysical status of inexorable necessity with which they were endowed, were bound to rouse the staunchest opposition in Ash'arite ranks. Mu'tazilism, therefore, notwithstanding its acceptance of the atomic theory, which it shared with Ash'arism, sought to interpret it in a manner which would avoid the thoroughgoing occasionalism of the Ash'arites, - and that in the interest of its ethical conception of the nature of moral freedom and responsibility.

Yet it must be noted in all fairness, that the success of the Mu'tazilah in this attempt was by no means complete. For the notion of God's uniqueness made it difficult for them too to save the integrity of the cosmic order and the reality of causal efficacy and self-determination. The historical interpretation of this

position is that Ash'arism, despite its antagonism to Mu'tazilism, represents a continuation of a line of dialectical development already discernible in Mu'tazilism, and whose radical direction is determined by the notion of divine uniqueness. Al-Baghdadi, after surveying briefly the Qadarite theory of 'generation' and its causal implications, sums up the ultimate retort of the Ash'arites to this theory, in a masterly manner reminiscent of Al-Ghazali's even to the letter. "The Qadarites contend," he writes, in a memorable passage, "that man might effect in himself a deed upon which there ensues a deed in another, of which he would be the agent, as he is of the cause (effected in himself...)... According to the Orthodox (aṣḥābuna), however: whatever is called 'product' (mutawallid) by the Qadarites is of God's own doing; since it is inadmissible that man should be said to act outside the sphere of his (inward activity). It is conceivable, in fact, that man might stretch the bow of his arch and send the arrow from his hand, and yet God refrain from creating flight (in the arrow)... It is likewise conceivable that the arrow might hit its target without breaking or rending it ... that man bring fire into contact with cotton, without its burning it contrary to habit; as He has decreed habitually that the child should be born only after the copulation of his parents, obesity only after feeding. Yet were it His will to create this (sc. the effect) from nothing, He would be able to achieve it."⁽¹²⁵⁾

We have here, in its embryonic state, the repudiation of causality as elaborated later by Al-Ghazali with the dialectical

acumen which he alone could wield.

V

Conditional Relationality and the Causal Nexus.

We have traced in the preceeding sections the historical origins of Al-Ghazali's doctrine of divine sovereignty and that of the inertness of being. There remains finally the notion of 'conditional relationality', the origins of which can be traced back to traditional Ash'arism.

The significance of this notion in Ash'arite Kalam is that, despite their subsumption of everything and every phenomenon in the universe to divine might, the Ash'arite doctors nevertheless conceded a sphere in which a necessary determinism holds sway. It is true that this concession was not admitted by all Ash'arite and Mu'tazilite doctors because of the limitations it was bound to impose on the power of God. We have already seen how an advocate of 'generation', Salih Qabbah, rejects any such limitation on the divine power. In the vindication of the absoluteness of His power, as will be seen presently, he refuses to concede any peremptoriness about the laws of logic. The case of Salih is worth examining because of its uniqueness. This curious thinker who carried the Ash'arite premisses to their extreme logical consequences in quite an honest fashion, held that the properties of things and the courses of phenomena are utterly contingent; so that "God might create (in man) the capacity to see (idrak) together with blindness, consciousness together with death...that He might cause him to burn

in fire without any sensation of pain but rather of pleasure." (126)

Here is an extraordinary account of his extravagance in adhering to the principle of unqualified divine power. In view of his persistence in referring everything to this power, he was once asked: suppose you were in Mecca, at this moment you are in Baghdad, dwelling in a tent without any consciousness of it, however, because God did not choose to create this consciousness in you - would you be in Mecca? He replied, Yes, and so ^{he} was nicknamed Ṣāliḥ Qubbah (Tent). He also was asked: supposed you were in Bassora and had a vision that you are in China, would you be in China? He replied: Yes. Pressed further: 'What if your feet were tied up to a man in Iraq', he persisted: 'I would still be in China'. (127)

Al-Ash'ari speaks of a whole party - 'Aṣḥab abul-Ḥasan aṣ-Ṣāliḥi', whose teaching on this question came very close to the fantastic teaching of Ṣāliḥ. In the controversy over the question: What can inhere in a substance and what cannot, this party diverged from the generality of Ash'arite doctors. They taught notably that the accidents of knowledge and power might coexist in a substance with death, without any contradiction. They disallowed, however, the coexistence of life and death, because, they argued, death contradicted life but not power or knowledge. (128)

They also admitted the coexistence of blindness with the capacity for vision/^(idraḳe) but not with sight (besar); because according to them, blindness contradicts sight, but not the capacity for vision. Perhaps their most important contention is the claim that substances can be divested of accidents, or even created without accidents altogether, - contrary to the teaching of the generality of the Ash'arites. (129)

The only

limitation of God's power that these followers of as-Salihi conceded was the coexistence of contradictories or the creation of accidents in no substratum (makan).⁽¹³⁰⁾

The teaching of Salihi represents, without doubt, an extreme statement of the problem at issue. The generality of Islamic theologians, Ash'arite and Mu'tazilite alike, acknowledged a very significant limitation on divine power; the limitation of His power, namely, to the sphere of logical consistency. Whatever involved contradiction could not be qualified as possible even for God. A law of necessary determinism holds sway, therefore, whenever a mode of correlation is logically imperative. Such, for instance, is the case in the instance of necessary conditional relations. Consciousness, will and power (Qudrah) cannot exist without the necessary ground of life, for life is the indispensable condition of these phenomena.⁽¹³¹⁾ Similarly the existence of a substance altogether devoid of accidents was declared impossible,⁽¹³²⁾ because it violated the principle of contradiction. As to the possibility of transmuting accidents into substances and vice versa⁽¹³³⁾ the opinion of the Mutakallims was divided. Those who admitted this possibility argued that things are what they are by reason of God's creating them in the manner He did; so that there is nothing repugnant in assuming that God might transmute things at will. Those who rejected this thesis argued from the impossibility of accidents subsisting in accidents. Transmutation, they argued, is the process of annihilating a set of accidents and substituting another set of accidents. But this presupposes a substratum in which these accidents are made to inhere; otherwise

we are involved in the absurd predicament of holding that accidents
(131)
subsist in accidents.

We have already examined Al-Ghazali's own doctrine of conditional relationality and the context in which it arose. In the controversy over the possibility of consciousness and will existing in the inanimate he lines up with the generality of the Ash'arite doctors. The inanimate is, by definition, that which is incapable of consciousness (idrak). If, therefore, consciousness should supervene on it, it can be called 'inanimate' (jamad) only equivocally. (135) Similarly the admission of the possibility of converting genera (ajnas) into each other, as well as the possibility of transmuting accidents into substances, is absurd. For if blackness is converted into power, the question would arise: Does blackness still subsist or does it not? If the latter, then blackness has not been converted but rather annihilated and in its stead another accident (power) has created. If the former, then the new accident has been conjoined to the previous one. Finally, since there is no 'tertium quid' (maddah mushtarakah) between genera as also between accidents and substances, their conversion (136) into each other is impossible.

It is, therefore, a grave illusion to hold that God is capable of effecting the impossible. There is no question here about the reference of 'power', human or divine, to what is impossible-in-itself. When the meaning of the possible (al-maqdur) and the impossible (al-muhāl) is apprehended, it is found to involve a glaring contradiction to assume that the 'impossible is possible'.

However, absolute and infinite, power can have reference only to what can be the object of power; and this is precisely what is meant by the 'possible'.
(137)

Chapter Three.

The Averroist Rehabilitation of Causality.

I.

Averroes and Maimonides in their Polemic against Ash'arite
Occasionalism.

In the course of his polemic against Islamic Kalam, Maimonides levels two major charges against Ash'arite Occasionalism, as the previous chapter has shown -, the one epistemological, the other metaphysical. Ash'arite Occasionalism threatens, in the first place, to denude things of their specific properties and powers and to abolish their fixed reality, inasmuch as it teaches that the relative fixity of this reality is grounded in the arbitrary fiat of God. And, in the second place, it threatens to repudiate the possibility of any conclusive knowledge about things, whether inductive or deductive; inasmuch as it repudiates the trustworthiness of sense-experience and the stringency of deductive reasoning from the proper quiddities and genera of things. ⁽¹⁾

The debt of Maimonides to Averroes in the formulation of his critique of Ash'arite Occasionalism can be readily perceived by whoever peruses their respective anti-Ash'arite writings, however cursorily. This debt would not arouse any surprise when it is recalled that both master and pupil were engaged in this anti-Ash'arite polemic for identical philosophic motives which resolve themselves, in the last analysis, into the vindication of the Aristotelian insight into the nature of knowledge as a necessary concomitant of the causal structure of things. ⁽²⁾

Throughout the whole of Tahafut-~~al~~Tahafut, Averroes re-iterates the charge of scepticism against the Ash'arites, on account of their repudiation of causality and the consequent occasionalist metaphysics they profess. ⁽³⁾ The full development of the Averroist thesis, however, is to be found in Question 17, where Averroes undertakes a thorough exposition of the nature of knowledge in terms of causality, in the course of his refutation of Al-Ghazali's causal doctrine. The two thesis around which the Averroist account of the matter revolves are the empirical perception of the reality of causal operations, as a datum of sense-experience, and the rational discernment of a law of necessary concomitance between knowledge and causality. That the fate of knowledge is bound up with the fate of causality, he argues, is evident from the fact that the ultimate distinction between entities which are knowable-in-themselves and entities which are unknowable-in-themselves resolves itself, in the last analysis, into the distinction between entities whose causes can be assigned and entities whose causes cannot. ⁽⁴⁾ If we were to strip things of their specific powers we would dissolve ^{everything} into utter and undifferentiated identity and repudiate the notion of wisdom and design underlying the providential disposition of things in the universe.

"But what, in effect, is the justification of the alleged correlation between the 'being' of things and their 'active powers'," one might candidly ask, at the outset. "What metaphysical principle that is to say, can be adduced in the substantiation of the claim

that the activity of an entity is even relevant to its being ?" Ash'arism claims that a thing is what it is by reason of God's decree, at every instant of its life, that it should be such. Similarly, whatever active powers are seen to emanate from it are the manifestation of God's own direct active intervention, rather than of any potency, intrinsic to it. Consequently, there is no 'internal relationship' between the being of an entity and its active operations ; the only relationship in which these two terms stand to each other is that of contingency or succession. (5) It is not the natural entity which acts when it is seen to act; it is rather God who acts through it ; so that the notion of activity is totally irrelevant to the notion of a thing's 'being' or quiddity.

The question is, of course, a very serious metaphysical question, of which neither scepticism nor dogmatism can proffer an adequate answer. For both dogmatism and scepticism the question remains a metaphysical riddle ; because neither a ready dogmatic, unreasoned answer nor the ready rejection of the possibility of a positive answer can solve this riddle. The problem of causality is, in the last analysis, no less and no more than this problem; for what, indeed, is the ground of the assumption that activity is grounded in the ontological structure of the real ? And what metaphysical principle presides upon the allegedly necessary relationship between Being and Act ??

The Peripatetic-Ash'arite controversy can be interpreted as an attempt to wrestle with this problem from two antithetically opposed metaphysical standpoints. If Al-Ghazali and the Ash'arite

theologians were unaware of this broad metaphysical formula of the problem, Maimonides and Averroes were certainly alive to its centrality in Aristotelian metaphysics. The summary, negative solution which Al-Ghazali gives to this problem represents a very naive reading of the causal problem, in its relation to the more general problem of being and knowing. The affirmation of a necessary law of reciprocity between Being and Activity is grounded in the insight into the nature of Being itself..Such a nature would remain hidden and mysterious unless Being were to utter itself, as it were, in outward activity. Now such an utterance, such a self-revelation, is not indifferent to the inward structure of Being ; otherwise it would not be self-revelatory, because it would be identical in every case of outward activity. But this is contradicted by the testimony of sense-experience and is, in any case, incompatible with the irreducible diversity of things.

We cannot, of course, pursue at length this abstract speculation about the problem of Being and Act in its general, metaphysical aspect. What the most elementary analysis of this problem shows is that Being and Act are somehow related to each other. The mode of this relationship, however, is here left unsettled. Now neither a negative nor an empirical account of this relationship, it can be shown a priori, is acceptable : because the Act clearly does not bespeak the Being in which it is rooted purely outwardly and, as it were, superficially ; otherwise no qualitative distinction (i.e. distinction in point of depth) can be posited between beings outwardly similar or identical. A negative account is discounted, as

we have seen, on the ground that Activity somehow bespeaks Being and utters it ; otherwise no generic distinction (i.e. distinction in point of selfhood or identity) can be posited between any two beings ; however much their respective activities might differ, since such activities are said to be irrelevant to the being in which they are rooted. But if neither a negative nor an empirical answer to the question at issue is acceptable, then we have demonstrated the reality of causality, as a positive principle of ontology -, as a principle, that is to say, whose extraction is not ~~empirical~~ and whose scope is not purely physical, but extends even to the metaphysical realm.

We shall examine at length later the exact meaning which can be assigned to causality in an Act-Potency metaphysics, both in Averroes and in Aquinas. Yet even at this stage of the argument, the centrality of the Aristotelian notion of the Act is displayed to sight. For Averroes as for Aristotle, the Being of an entity is inextricably bound up with the Act through which it is constituted; that is, is posited in being. ⁽⁶⁾ If the notion of Act here envisaged were a univocal notion, as monistic pantheism holds, then the dialectic of oneness would be absolutely inexorable. Diversity and multiplicity would have no ~~part~~ in the ontological structure of the real ; and the deceptive panorama of manifoldness, as the Eleatics taught, would be a fleeting mirage of absolute and abiding identity. ⁽⁷⁾ If, on the other hand, the Act is reduced to the status of contingency, then chaotic formlessness would reign in a 'cosmic' order wherein no rationality would inhere. What clue, indeed, can

reason have in this 'chaotic' order to the natures and definitions of things ? Philosophy posits it as a self-evident axiom that things are what they are by reason of their specific quiddities and that these specific quiddities are revealed in the specific, causal operations pertaining to things. (8) And it is with this axiom that the possibility of definitions and demonstrations is bound up. This is tacitly admitted even by the Mutakallims themselves, who concede the existence of conditions which are necessary correlatives of the conditioned ; such as life in its correlation to knowledge, as the condition to the conditioned. (9) They, likewise, concede that things have necessary definitions and natures which can be employed as premisses in valid demonstrations ; such as the premiss that design implies an intelligent designer, and teleology in nature implies consciousness on the part of its Author. (10) But the admission of the possibility of necessary demonstrations entails the possibility of necessary knowledge. And when the nature of rational knowledge is explored it is found to be reducible to knowledge of the causes underlying things. The very notion of reason or intellect, whereby it differs from other noetic faculties (*fiwa mudri kah*), is reducible to the notion of cogitating (*idraK*) things through their causes. "Thus to repudiate causes is to repudiate reason" and with it all science ; since adequate knowledge of things consists in the knowledge of their causes. In this repudiation of reason and science, nothing can hold its own as necessary or final, not even the nihilistic contention of the sceptic who affirms this position. (11)

The abolition of knowledge in this nihilistic way involves a further corollary of far-reaching consequence to Ash'arite theology itself. The negation of the determinate and fixed properties of things, as we have seen in Maimonides, militates against the cardinal theological interests of the Ash'arites : namely, the demonstration of the existence of God and the determination of His sovereign attributes. The contingent, occasionalist metaphysics propounded by the Ash'arite doctors despoils the natural order of any fixity that might be ascribed to it. All natural processes are reduced to the status of contingent acts (af'al ja'izah) ⁽¹²⁾ of a capricious despot who disposes things in accordance with the sole decree of his capricious will. ⁽¹³⁾ It is apparent how in the perspective of this metaphysical theory, no positive verdict about reality can be pronounced, neither from the standpoint of the creator nor from the standpoint of the creature. For in the latter case, such a verdict would have no determinate and fixed object to which to correspond ; since neither the identity of the object with itself nor its distinction from other things are safeguarded. ⁽¹⁴⁾ And in the former case, the capricious will of the creator, which represents the sole norm of the ontological determinations pertaining to things, would be totally impervious to human insight, since its course would be altogether inscrutable. ⁽¹⁵⁾

Note here the disturbing consequence of this radical scepticism for Ash'arite theology itself. If the causal principle is devoid of stringency altogether, then the process of transition from the effect to the cause would be utterly unwarranted.. The question

would then arise : "What, indeed, is the ground of the presumption that there exists a Sovereign Being Who stands to the universe in a position of causal relationship ? What is the justification, that is to say, of the process of ascent from the creature to the creator, unless the causal nexus is presupposed and its absolute validity in this dual relationship between the creator and the creature is conceded ?" This is the most striking dilemma in which the Ash'arite dialectic is caught up. The Ash'arites begin by distinguishing two modes of activity : volitional and natural (*iradiyyah wa tabiiyah*). From this they proceed to argue that all activity is ultimately referrable to a free, living, knowing, powerful Agent, of whose hidden presence all effects in nature are the outward manifestation. For on the premisses of the Ash'arites, it is absurd to ascribe activity either to the animate or the inanimate agents in nature, as we have seen at length in expounding the Ash'arite doctrine of the inertness of substances and the negation of human freedom. (16) But if activity is predicable neither of the animate nor of the inanimate agents, whence indeed do the Ash'arites deduce the notion of such an Invisible Agent, as the Sole Efficient Cause in all activity, natural and voluntary alike ? Whence, that is to say, does the cosmological argument here employed, derive its stringency when the validity of the causal principle is repudiated with such dispatch ? (17)

But this is not the only disturbing consequence of Ash'arite occasionalism to their theological presuppositions. The repudiation of the causal principle leaves without the possibility of settlement the problem of the determination of God's attributes, as of the

demonstration of His existence. The attributes of life and activity, contrary to the expectations of the Ash'arites, are as impredicable of the Divine, as of the human, agents. For the former attribute is deducible from the latter, as its condition and ground. But the Ash'arites gainsay this very conditional relationship between activity and life in the visible agent; so that the presumption that life inheres in the Invisible Agent is wholly unwarranted. (18)

The charge which the Ash'arites and Al-Ghazali, therefore, level against the Peripatetics on the ground that the Peripatetic notion of activity, when predicated of God, is employed in a metaphorical sense (majazan) can now be attended to. (19) The notion of activity in a genuine sense, the Ash'arites and Al-Ghazali argue, is inseparable from the notion of will and consciousness. When activity is predicated of inanimate and unconscious agents in nature, on account of their transitive operations, it is then to be understood in a purely metaphorical or figurative sense ('ala sabil al majaz). The very distinction between voluntary and natural activity is in fact, purely arbitrary. (20) Only a willing conscious agent can be said to act. But the Peripatetics repudiate the notion of will and freedom in God, so that their pretence of adhering to the doctrine of a volitional creative act on the part of God can only be interpreted as sheer duplicity and hypocrisy. (21)

This charge, Averroes retorts with singular resolution, rests upon a misconception of the Peripatetic notion of activity. The Ash'arites and Al-Ghazali begin by stripping all creatures,

animate and inanimate, of the predicates of activity and power, in the interest of absolute divine power and fore-ordination. In this manner, they believe, they can save the purity and transcendence of activity as the exclusive attribute of the Almighty. But instead of saving the reality of divine activity and divine transcendence they naively succumb to the temptation of anthropomorphic dialectic. No sooner the concept of activity has been banished from the cosmic sphere than it creeps surreptitiously into the sphere of transcendent, divine life. Yet neither in the cosmic sphere nor in the divine sphere is the legitimacy of this concept safeguarded, on the premisses of the Ash'arites. The negation of its validity in the former casts the sinister shadow of suspicion on the genuineness of its claims in the latter. The ultimate issue of Ash'arite dialectic is that it has posited God "as an eternal man" but only after it had stripped man of his positive ontological predicates and allowed him to vaporize in mid-air -, thus dissolving God and man, the analogue and the analogate, into sheer non-entities. (22)

The root of the fallacy upon which the Ash'arites' accusation rests is their failure to fathom the Peripatetic notion of activity, when predicated of God, and the transcendent mode of this predicability. The reality of divine activity ought to be retained, but not at the cost of cosmic activity and the integrity of its autonomous life, lest this procedure should threaten to destroy the very reality of divine activity itself. Nor ought the distinction between natural and voluntary act, in the cosmic sphere, to be abandoned; for it is self-evident that activity is

divisible into natural and voluntary, ~~natural or voluntary~~. (23)

The mode of operation of the former agents is such that they always act in a uniform way; as in the case of heat which always generates heat, humidity which always generates humidity. Voluntary agents, on the other hand, are such that they act in diverse ways at diverse times, because their nature has regard to contraries. (24)

Now the Peripatetics refrain from ascribing either voluntary or natural activity to God; and that is what gives occasion to the Ash'arite accusation. Natural activity, according to the Peripatetics, is impredicable of God on two accounts: First, because natural activity is posited through a necessity in the essence of the natural agent rather than through a necessity in the essence of the voluntary agent from whose will it emanates and of whom it is the fulfillment. (25) But this would imply that divine activity is determined through the necessity of the divine essence and is independant of the divine will. Second, such activity would not be accompanied by consciousness; and it is a tenet of Peripatetic metaphysics that God's activity emanates consciously from Him. Voluntary activity, on the other hand, is impredicable of God because the movement of volition entails a movement of desire in an imperfect agent who seeks the good as the term of his desire and wherein his will comes to rest. But this would posit 'passivity' (infi'al) and change in God, and this is absolutely inadmissible. (26) Consequently knowledge and will ought to be predicated of God in a manner dissimilar (la tushbih) to human or natural activity. The mode of this will and knowledge, however, remains totally

incomprehensible because it transcends all modes of activity which we encounter in the domain of concrete existence. (27)

The negation of the law of necessary concomitance between life and activity would thus invalidate the predicability of life to the Creator, inasmuch as no logical transition from the latter to the former concept, as its ground or condition, can be effected. Nor can any such transition from the concept of activity to the concept of wisdom be effected either; so that neither the teleological nor the cosmological arguments for the existence of God would be valid, because the middle term is wanting in both cases. (28)

An order of being which is shorn of all necessary, ontological determinations can scarcely be said to bespeak the wisdom and perfection of its Designer. If things could be otherwise than what they actually are, then no 'reason' can be assigned to the specific determinations with which they are endued. But this is to affirm that no order of design inheres in the created order, and consequently that no wisdom can be ascribed to its Author. (29)

"Thus to abolish the necessity which inheres in the quantities, qualities and substrata of created things, as the Ash'arites contend with regard to creatures in their relation to the Creator, is to abolish the wisdom which is found in the creator and the creature, alike; so that every agent would be an author and every determinant a creator. And this is to abolish reason and wisdom." (30)

Thus the necessity inhering in the ontological determinations of things has two parallel grounds. Considered from the standpoint of its Author, the universe is seen to be necessary through the

necessity of divine wisdom - and providence. Considered from the standpoint of its own, intrinsic structure, it is seen to be necessary through the necessity of logical determinations involved in the generic natures and definitions of the entities constituting it⁽³¹⁾. To call this necessity into question or to presume that the specific properties of substances could have been otherwise, would amount to the abolition of all wisdom and knowledge about these substances, since the irreducibility of their specific determinations is thereby exposed to suspicion.

It will be noticed here that both lines of reasoning converge at one point : the notion of an absolute wisdom inhering in the creator ~~as~~ the 'formal pattern' of His providential ordering of things and in the creature as the 'logos' of its natural self-development. The coincidence of these two modes of wisdom is a metaphysical postulate without which reason can neither unravel the riddles of nature nor rise to the contemplation of its Author from the signs of visible things, because it would find itself revolving in the orbit of a chaotic universe wherein no secure footpath can be found.⁽³²⁾

II.

The Justification of the Causal Principle and the Critique of Contingency.

The affirmation of a necessary quantitative and qualitative determinism in the cosmic order here advocated would seem to run counter to the phenomena of becoming and development in the

universe and involve us thus in the Eleatic dilemma. Yet the Eleatic dilemma rests upon an elaborate metaphysic of being and becoming which contradicts the testimony of sense-experience and is, in any case, incapable of giving a satisfactory account of the glaring reality of becoming in the universe. But the claims of Eleatic ontology can be entertained only once it has succeeded in explaining becoming away ; and this would call for an elaborate metaphysic of becoming, a metaphysic, that is, which ought at least to reckon with becoming as a fact.

Viewed in its metaphysical perspective, the problem of activity is only one instance of the problem of becoming. A distinction, however, is here imperative, the distinction namely between the two modes of voluntary and involuntary activity referred to above. In the latter case the becoming involved in natural activity is intrinsic and immanent ; that is, is posited through the immanent necessity inhering in the essence of the agent and the laws of its becoming. In the former case, this becoming is extrinsic, that is, is posited through the necessity of an extraneous free determinant whose determinism is grounded in the spontaneity of his will. But in both species of activity there is a transition from one phase of being to another, a movement towards the perfection of being-in-act ; and this is the definition of becoming. In this movement or transition whatever plays the role of 'energising principle', either in a free or a necessary manner, is cause in the strict sense. Thus the notion of activity is seen, upon analysis, to be no more and no less than the notion of this development from potency to Act ;

(33)

from relative imperfection to relative perfection. In their quest (34) for knowledge about things, Averroes explains, the Philosophers observed that perceptible things, whether animate or inanimate, are composed of matter and form; the latter being "the principle (ma'na) whereby an object comes to be after it was not!", the former being 'that out of which' the object comes to be. They observed likewise that an object comes to be through something ('an shay') which they called the "efficient cause" and 'for the sake of something' which they called the 'final cause'. (35) With this distinction in composite beings between matter and form securely established, they proceeded to show that the Form constitutes the principle of Being as well as the principle of Activity in these composite things. For in the first place, it is to the Form that the name and definition of a thing point, and through it that it acquires its specific determinations. (36) In the second place, inasmuch as such a composite object becomes what it is through the perfection (kamal) which supervenes upon the matter from the side of the Form, Form is avowedly the 'energising principle', the ground of actualization in this process of becoming. This can further be demonstrated from the metaphysical axiom that a being "acts inasmuch as it is in Being," (37) since whatever is in potency can be actualized only through the agency of that which is in act.

The anthropomorphic view of activity and causality, which Al-Ghazali and the Ash'arites cherish, ought therefore to yield to this metaphysical interpretation of the matter, if the misconceptions born of this view are to be expunged from the sphere

of speculative theology and metaphysics. The anthropomorphic conception of activity is, in fact, a naive and primitive conception which cannot, as we have seen, even serve the purpose for which it was contrived; namely, the specification of the mode of divine activity. because it reduces divine activity to the status of human activity with all the passivity and imperfection such a reduction involves. No wonder the Ash'arites were incapable of arriving at an adequate conception of the Deity and His relationship to the cosmic order in a manner which leaves His transcendence unimpaired. Al-Ghazali typifies their misconception of the nature of this relationship in his attack on the Peripatetic notion of God as pure Act, or Thought thinking itself. Here he accuses the Philosophers with despoiling God of His attributes and reducing Him into an inert and lifeless being whose consciousness does not extend beyond the limits of consciousness of self. ⁽³⁸⁾ But it is precisely with a view to avoiding the anthropomorphic error that the Philosophers postulate God as Pure Act, from which all Being and Activity in the universe emanate. The examination of the order of being and its progression from composite things in the world of generation and corruption, to simple and incomposite beings in the heavenly sphere (viz. the separate Intelligences), led them to posit a 'First Intellect' who is free from all composition and whose and whose consciousness embraces all things and determines the order and disposition of the universe in the most eminent way, and who ⁽³⁹⁾ depends, in turn, on a 'First separate Principle' who is God.

It is thus that God, as First Cause, is said to be conscious of the universe and the order presiding upon it as the cause and principle (40) of this order rather than as its effect or consequent.

This metaphysical conception of activity in terms of consciousness restores to divine activity the character of transcendence which Ash'arite theology threatened to abolish. God, as pure Intellect, is also seen to be Pure Act (41), so that in the same inward movement of self-consciousness He generates the same current of Being and Movement through which the Being and order of the universe are constituted. And it is in this way that He is said to preserve the universe in being and order; that is to be its Author and Designer. Ash'arite theology, as we have seen, cannot break through the circle of anthropomorphism, in its conception of activity, because it fails to attain to the pure notion of an immanent activity, the highest manifestation of which in the cosmic order is the act of consciousness. No wonder Ash'arism has not succeeded in freeing God from the conditions of movement and passivity. Nor has it, in fact, succeeded in giving any intelligible account of becoming and activity in general. In a metaphysic of Act-Potency such activity and becoming are found to be rooted in the cosmic discrepancy between the plenitude of the Act and the penury of potency; between the perfection of the Form and the Imperfection of the Matter. Therefore becoming is conceived (42) as desire and quest and the teleology of its movement as rationality. But inasmuch as such a teleology must have a terminal issue in a

principle of absolute fulfillment wherein cosmic movement and desire find their rest, this principle can be said to act only if by act is meant the inward movement of self-consciousness revolving upon itself. And inasmuch as in this movement is grounded the being of everything that is by virtue of the Act which stirs within the bosom of all things, becoming, activity and movement are seen to be nothing but the otherness of the immanent movement of divine self-consciousness.

The aversion of Al-Ghazali to this doctrine of divine life and activity leads him, as we have seen, to found the Godhead of the Divinity in a principle of volition and power, rather than in a principle of consciousness and wisdom. This procedure is found, upon examination, to impair the transcendence of God and the supereminence of His activity and wisdom. The Peripatetics, whatever the defects of their doctrine of divine consciousness, are endeavouring, at least, to save the purity of divine consciousness and activity and to free it from the conditions of change and movement. That is why they find the essence of God, as Pure Act, in Pure Self-consciousness in terms of which they specify the notion of divine life as well as the mode of divine activity. For them, in short, God remains the pivot of all cosmic activity and the center towards which divine consciousness, like all consciousness indeed, gravitates. For Al-Ghazali and the Ash'arites, divine wisdom and consciousness, as well as divine volition and activity, have their center outside the Divinity, that is, in the sphere of cosmic becoming and movement. God manifests His sovereign will and

His sovereign wisdom in the purposeless and senseless act of creating and cogitating a transient world of creatures who are shorn of any positive or substantial being. ⁽⁴³⁾ In thus derogating of the divinity of the Almighty, Al-Ghazali and the Ash'arites propose to defend His transcendence against the allegedly blasphemous claims of the Peripatetics.

* * * * *

With this digression on the metaphysical aspect of causality and activity in their bearing on divine activity, we turn to the justification of the causal principle in its naturalistic setting. It has been shown so far that a law of necessary concomitance between knowledge and causality ought to reign if the danger of universal scepticism and nihilism are to be averted. But this indirect procedure would remain futile unless the validation of the causal principle is achieved in a positive way and the metaphysic of contingency successfully refuted.

With respect to the validation of the causal principle, Averroes argues, at the opening of his refutation of Al-Ghazali's thesis, that the reality of causal operations is attested by sense-experience. One can only contest this reality on the ground that visible agents are not sufficient for the production of their effects, and consequently cannot be said legitimately to be causes in a genuine sense. Yet the question of the sufficiency of visible or secondary causes for the production of their effects is irrelevant to the question regarding the validity of the causal principle in general. The Peripatetics themselves admit the

existence of a Transcendant Agent (Fa'il min Kkarij') who is the condition of the being as well as of the operation of existing things.⁽⁴⁴⁾ But this admission, according to them, does not warrant the contention that all activity is ascribable to this Transcendant Agent; since it is an incontrovertible postulate that accidents, at least, are generated by natural causes.⁽⁴⁵⁾ The error of theistic occasionalism, as propounded by Al-Ghazali and the Ash'arites, consists precisely in their contention that God, as the Primary Agent, is the sole agent in all the operations of nature because He is Agent par excellence. In these operations, they argue, it is either the Creator or the creature who acts; there is no middle term to the process of activity. But it is in this false disjunction that the root of the difficulty lies. Al-Ghazali argues that God must be a voluntary agent, since it is impossible that He should be a natural agent; that is, an agent who acts through a mode of absolute necessity. On this account, he charges the Peripatetics with ~~d~~espoiling God of the attribute of voluntary activity. But here too his argument is vitiated by the incomplete disjunction upon which it rests. We ought, therefore, to examine the exact manner in which activity is predicable of the Creator and the creature, of the Primary and Secondary agents, in the hope that the determination of the exact mode of activity in the two instances might solve the dilemma in which the Ash'arites profess to involve the Peripatetics.

In the Act-Potency metaphysics which we have outlined above, activity is interpreted as the supervention upon a substratum

in potency of a specific 'form', which brings it forth from the state of potentiality to the state of actuality. An agent, therefore, is said to act inasmuch as it effects this transition (46) from potency to act in a given substratum. And this applies to all agents finite and infinite, primary and secondary. Whenever there is activity, there is transition from potency to act. Yet the mode of activity is not the same in the case of the primary and the secondary agents. The That of activity, that is to say, is identical in both cases; otherwise its predication of the universal and particular agents would not be warranted, as the Ash'arites erroneously hold. The How of this activity is different in the two instances. The manner in which a particular agent acts is to bring a substratum from a state of potency to a state of act in a determinate way, by imparting to it a particular 'form'. Once this has been effected, the process comes to rest and the agent and patient drift apart, to stand each on its own. (47) But in the case of the Universal Agent the dependence does not terminate with the production of the effect, since the effect depends upon the First Cause for its subsistence, no less than for its genesis. That is why it can legitimately be said that the Primary Agent is the Author and the Preserver of the Universe, through the providence of order whereby He governs all things. (48)

This delineation of the respective spheres of activity of the Primary and Secondary agents in natural operations affords us with the clue to the false dilemma which Al-Ghazali and the Ash'arites propose. Inasmuch as a distinct province is assigned to each of

these agents, no conflict or encroachment can come about; and, therefore, the ousting of the secondary agent by the Primary Agent can be described in no other terms than that of usurpation and violence.

The appeal to sense-experience, however, in the validation of causality is no conclusive evidence, since the opponent can always urge, in the manner of Al-Ghazali, that sense-experience attests merely that the effect occurs with (ma'ahu) the cause rather than through it (bihi) ⁽⁴⁹⁾. But this would leave undetermined the question of any internal relationship between the cause and the effect; since sense-experience cannot avowedly go beyond the assertion of an external relationship of contiguity or succession. Such a relationship, however, is purely temporal; so that any ontological relationship between cause and effect, in terms of relative or absolute Being, ⁽⁵⁰⁾ remains to be demonstrated. Otherwise, the thesis of Al-Ghazali and the Ash'arites would be incontrovertible.

In order to demonstrate the validity of causality, as a first principle of ontology, causality ought to be logically deducible from the concept of Being. The most elemental principle of Being is the law of its identity with itself. Any assertion which violates this principle can be ruled out as irrational and absurd. But the negation of the causal principle violates this very law of identity inasmuch as it runs counter to the law of necessary concomitance between the knowledge of Being and its causal operations.. Being as we have seen, ⁽⁵¹⁾ utters itself in causality;

otherwise its nature would remain hidden; that is, it would remain utterly unknowable and impervious to human consciousness. The positive reality of knowledge is not here in question, since scepticism cannot escape this reality without loading itself with the 'burden of the proof' and thus surrendering its attitude of arm-chair nihilism. Nor can scepticism fly in the face of the evidence according to which things are known in their identity with themselves and their distinction from other things, no matter what metaphysical account is given of this knowledge, its conditions or its limits. ⁽⁵⁴⁾ Now the law of identity states that things are what they are by reason of the specific quiddities of definitions pertaining to them. These quiddities or definitions cannot be deduced 'a priori' from the abstract concept of the thing-in-itself, as Platonic idealism teaches. The differentiae, without which such definitions would be impossible, cannot be determined a priori either. Instead they must be determined through a process of empirical induction. And although the differentiae themselves are evidently not data of sense-experience, their determination is possible only through inference from the empirical effects which are the outward signs of these differentiae, as it were. The negation of the causal correlation between an entity and the effects emanating from it would, therefore, militate ⁽⁵⁵⁾ against the possibility of knowledge itself. It is here visible how the abolition of knowledge amounts to a negation of ⁽⁵⁶⁾ the identity of Being, and likewise, of the very nature of being.

At this point we can turn to the question of the necessity of the causal nexus. But an important remark ought to be made at the

outset. The validity of the causal principle is independant of its necessity. That is, the validity of the causal principle might be retained even if the necessity of the causal nexus were to be exposed to suspicion. We have already examined the manner in which the sufficiency of the secondary, natural cause is conditional upon the co-operation of the Primary Cause, who represents the condition of its being as well as its operation in the natural sphere. This Primary Cause is avowedly a condition in the necessary operation of the natural cause, so that if it were to be supposed, ad absurdum, to withhold its cooperation, the necessary operation of the secondary cause would be withheld. But in addition to this transcendant condition there exists a whole series of conditions which are indispensable for the necessary operation of the secondary cause in question. Production has regard to two terms: passivity and activity (fi'l wan fi'al). But even when the agent impinges upon the patient the effect does not necessarily follow upon the cause unless the series of *Conditions requisite for the emergence of the latter is wholly posited. Inasmuch, however, as this series of* conditions (idhafat) is infinite, the possibility of the super-vention of an impeding condition cannot be discounted a priori. A body, for instance, might be endowed with a property whereby it can withstand the active operation of an agent (e.g. fire), but this would not justify the contention that the agent is shorn of the active property peculiar to it (Sc. combustion.) (57)

The demonstration of the validity and necessity of the causal principle, which we have been attempting, cannot go beyond the explicitation of its contents and the determination of its

metaphysical grounds. But once this has been achieved, the critic would have frankly to admit that positive deductions can do nothing to convert the sceptic. The negative procedure, however, might prove of some help here. Like all elemental, indemonstrable principles, the causal principle can be defended against the attacks of scepticism. Once these attacks have been repulsed the integrity of the principle in question would emerge intact and its validity, if not conclusively demonstrated, would in any case have been strengthened. With this in mind we can now turn to the second stage of the Averroist argument; namely: the critique of the contingent metaphysic of occasionalism.

In repudiating the necessity of the causal principle, Al-Ghazali following the Ash'arite doctors, declares that the correlation between causes and effects, far from being necessary, is rather a contingent sequence following the 'direction of Habit'. But this notion of 'habit', Averroes argues, is found upon examination to be a meaningless notion. Al-Ghazali and the Ash'arites might mean by this 'habit' one of three things: the habit of God in determining the normal course of things; the habit of things themselves in following this normal course; or our own habit in passing judgments upon things. Now it is impossible that this habit should be God's, since habit is defined as a "trait (malakah) acquired by the agent and necessitating the recurrence of his activity in the generality of cases";⁽⁵⁸⁾ and this runs counter to the doctrine of the immutable ways of God as set forth in the Koran itself where it is written: "Thou shalt never find an

alteration of the Ways of God.'⁽⁵⁹⁾ Nor can it be the habit of things, whereby they normally act in a uniform way; since a habit thus implanted in things is more appropriately called 'nature'. And the notion of a nature, which is necessary at one time and contingent at another, is absurd. There remains the third and final alternative; namely, the habit in question refers to our own mode of passing judgments about things. This is admissible, if by this habit is meant the mode of the intellect's procedure in passing judgments upon things, as necessitated by its own nature. But inasmuch as the notion of habit is contingent and conventional (Wadh'i), to speak of the 'habit' of the intellect would be incompatible with the notion of the necessity of the intellect's procedure in accordance with the necessary laws of logic, unless we hold with some of the Mutakallims that the nature of the intellect is itself contingent.⁽⁶⁰⁾ If the nature of the intellect, like the nature of everything else is alleged to be contingent and inconstant, then no wisdom can be attributed to the Creator in their production;⁽⁶¹⁾ and this is clearly contrary to the theological presuppositions of the Ash'arites themselves.

The most decisive argument which Al-Ghazali adduces in his demonstration of the rational possibility of miracle is the argument from God's infinite power and resourcefulness. Even if the specific determinations of things are conceded, Al-Ghazali argues as we have seen, and even if the fixity of the cosmic order is conceded too, it can still be urged that God can cause a body

to withstand the effect of combustion, for example, upon contact with fire, by transmuting the nature of fire or the nature of that body and thus withholding from fire its specific effect which is combustion. (62) Similarly God can relax the causal series or abolish it altogether, without violence to the rationality of the causal process, and thus bring about a miraculous deed capable of insertion into the natural order. Thus the rescussitation of the dead can be explained in the following manner: It is admitted by the Peripatetics themselves that matter is susceptible of every determination: earth and the other elements become vegetation, vegetation is consumed by the animal and thus it is transmuted into blood, blood in turn becomes semen, and semen generates the embryo. This process is normally wrought throughout a determinate lapse of time; yet there is nothing rationally repugnant in the assumption that the Almighty can bring about the generation of the animal from earth in a very brief lapse of time, by relaxing the time-process through which the successive phases of generation described above normally ensue one upon the other. (63) Thus the integrity of the causal principle would be safeguarded at least ideally, and the rationality of miracle vindicated in stringent, philosophic terms.

But such a contention, retorts Averroes, is philosophically indefensible, however much it might commend itself to the advocates of theistic occasionalism. The Peripatetics would go the length of admitting the possibility of an agent impinging upon a patient in such a manner as to leave it totally unaffected, owing to the

supervention of an extraneous condition which impedes the efficacy of the agent in question. ⁽⁶⁴⁾ They would also go the length of admitting that bodies which have a "common matter" are reciprocally convertible one into the other; as is the case, on the teaching of the Peripatetics, with the four simple elements: air, water, earth and fire. But it is with respect to bodies which have no 'common matter' ⁽⁶⁵⁾ or whose 'material substrata' are diverse that the difficulty arises. Can it be said that such bodies are susceptible of receiving identical 'forms' or are convertible one into the other? If, for instance, a body is not susceptible of a specific form without passing through a series of intermediate phases, is it possible for it to receive the form in question directly, as Al-Ghazali alleges in the case of the generation of the animal out of earth? But if this were possible, as the Mutakallims and Al-Ghazali hold, and if the Form-Man could supervene upon 'earth' without any intermediate dispositions, then wisdom would have enjoined that man should have been created without the roundabout process which the generation of man normally follows, unless God's wisdom were incomplete and His power ineffective. ⁽⁶⁶⁾

It is thus evident how the negation of the causal principle, considered from the standpoint of divine wisdom and craftsmanship, threatens to impair this wisdom and the rationality inhering in the execution of God's creative designs. The validity of causality is, therefore, grounded ultimately in three major metaphysical postulates:

L. The necessary determinism inhering in divine wisdom,

as the principle presiding over divine activity and divine providence.

2. The irreducible identity of substances, as grounded in their specific, ontological structure.

3. The necessary concomitance involved in the correlation between Being and Knowledge, in their dependance upon the causal principle as the middle term of this correlation.

III

The Limitations of the Averroist Critique of Occasionalism.

The three metaphysical postulates enunciated above represent the clue to the Averroist critique of Ash'arite occasionalism and the dialectical foundations of his procedure, in the rehabilitation of causality. Yet Averroes, as we have hinted previously, ⁽⁶⁷⁾ has in this manner solved only one half of the problem out of which the occasionalism of Al-Ghazali and the Ash'arites has grown. The motive of Al-Ghazali in repudiating causality is his desire to give a rational account of miracle as a phenomenon capable of insertion into the natural order, without violence to its rational integrity. That is why he reduces this natural order into a plastic order whose being and whose subsistence depend, at every instant of its life, upon the direct intervention of the Deity. This metaphysic of 'cosmic malleability', Averroes maintains in refuting the Ghazalian thesis, is not only absurd and indefensible; what is more, it is inimical to the very thesis:

it is designed to vindicate: namely, the sovereignty and the omnipotence of God, - because it reduces God ~~into~~ a capricious and senseless despot whose creative designs are shorn of all rationality and the counsel of whose providence is a counsel of folly.

Now if the metaphysical drapery of theistic occasionalism is allowed to drop, on account of its naiveness and its inner inconsistency, what would be the fate of the miraculous and the extraordinary in the cosmic order? What rational account can be proffered, that is to say, in the justification of God's heterogeneous incursion into the domain of the real? - The (68) legitimacy of the problem, as we have hinted previously, is not here in question; since, in any case, such legitimacy can be affirmed or denied only once the case for miracle has been fully investigated. If so, then what can philosophy say about miracle and the rationality of its extraordinary emergence in nature?

It is ⁱⁿ Averroes's answer to this question that his failure to fathom the problem of miracle to its depths is displayed to sight. Philosophy, he maintains, has nothing at all to say about the problem, because it is a problem which falls wholly outside the pale of philosophic speculation. We shall see shortly that this answer is not incongruous with the intellectualistic and deterministic presuppositions of Averroes's metaphysics. But before examining these presuppositions might it not be said, at the outset, in the defence of Averroes, that his thesis is not alto-

gether unjustifiable, at least in principle ?? For the credulous as well as for the sceptic, miracle is without philosophic relevance. Whether miracle is believed or disbelieved, the consequence is the same ; miracle is no problem at all ; in the former case, because it is accepted without question ; in the latter case, because there is no question about accepting it. And Averroes, in his procedure in dismissing miracle as irrelevant to philosophic speculation, is endeavouring to do justice to the faith of the credulous as well as to the unfaith of the sceptic.

On the surface of it such a position might seem altogether harmless. The advocates of arm-chair, unquestioning religious fideism and agnosticism might exclaim : "Blessed are they who have not seen, but have believed." But those who believe without seeing must have reasons for doing so ; otherwise their faith would be blind and indiscriminating and their foremost duty to the Truth would be forsaken. Belief and unbelief have meaning only in the perspective of this Truth, in default of which belief and unbelief, falsehood and truthfulness, would be identical. But this counsel of identity is a counsel of falsehood and the advocates of unreasoned belief are advocates of obscurantism and darkness. Even in the subjective psychology of belief, a world of difference exists in the last analysis between belief and belief.

The apparent innocuousness of the Averroist position can be rejected on a more serious ground. Miracle might be accepted by the credulous unquestioningly or rejected by the sceptic uncompromisingly. But if the credulous has the right to be enlightened, the sceptic has a weightier right: i.e., the right to

be converted. The enlightenment of the credulous is not as urgent a matter as the conversion of the sceptic. But what of the sceptic who slumbers in every soul, in the soul of the credulous no less than the soul of the sceptic? This sceptic must needs be silenced and therefore converted through the only effective weapon; that is, the weapon of rational argument.

It might be suspected here that this emphatic insistence on the efficacy of reason in the conversion of the unbeliever would lead imperceptibly to a position of absolute intellectualism, not unlike that of Averroes. But this is an illusion. What we are endeavouring to do here is neither to abolish the sphere of belief nor to confuse it with that of reason; we are advocating, that is to say, neither absolute intellectualism nor absolute fideism. Much less are we endeavouring to plant the standard of reason in the territory of faith, through a process of metaphysical violence. We are here pre-occupied with the problem of 'initial belief' - at that point where a 'critical rationalism' can do a great deal to convert the sceptic and enlighten the credulous. And it is our contention that philosophy has something to say about such problems, not with respect to the affirmation or the denial of the evidence upon which their authenticity rests, however, but rather with respect to their critical rationalization and their incorporation into the body of doctrine rationally valid, once their credentials had been examined and the seal of genuineness affixed to them.

After reproducing Al-Ghazali's account of the Peripatetic naturalistic interpretation of miracle, ⁽⁶⁹⁾ Averroes writes: "As regards miracle, the ancient philosophers had nothing to say about

them, because these things according to them are to be reckoned among matters which should not be critically investigated. or scrutinized, because they pertain to the first principles of religion (shar'). Whoever questions or criticizes them deserves punishment according to them; as, indeed, whoever enquires into the other fundamentals of religion, such as the question whether God exists; [....] since the existence (of these things) is not doubtful, although the mode of their existence is a 'divine thing' transcending the powers of human reason".⁽⁷⁰⁾ The justification of this acquiescence is that virtue is grounded in these fundamentals of religion. But speculative knowledge itself depends upon the acquisition of virtue, so that knowledge would be impossible unless virtue is pre-supposed as its anterior condition. Now if it is indisputable that speculative disciplines rest upon certain precepts (awda') which are transmitted to a teacher, much more ought practical disciplines to be referable to the authority of a teacher.⁽⁷¹⁾ It is the duty of whoever delves into these disciplines, therefore, to accept the first principles pertaining to them without question; because this acceptance is indispensable for religious virtue which in turn is indispensable for the existence of man, as man. The repudiation of the first principles of religion is therefore inimical to the very existence of man as a social animal. All that can be positively asserted with respect to these principles is that they pertain to a domain which transcends human reason; so that their admission is incumbent on the philosopher, despite his ignorance of the grounds of their validity or their inner reasons (asbab). That is why we find the

ancients silent on the question of miracle which is the foundation of the validity of religion and the ultimate guarantee of virtue, according to them. (72)

Avicenna's naturalistic interpretation of miracle,- Averroes pursues the argument - can be admitted if the facts actually warrant it (idha Sahhal'Wujud), that is, if a body is actually shown to change through the agency of a non-corporeal power or entity. This admission however does not go beyond the admission of the possibility of such phenomena simpliciter. It does not warrant the contention that these phenomena are possible for man. For a multitude of things which are possible-in-themselves are, nevertheless, impossible for man. And miracle ought to be reckoned among such phenomena. The only limitation on this maxim is that things impossible-in-reason are not possible at all, not even for the prophet who is avowedly capable of performing deeds not possible for the generality of men. (73) The most outstanding instance of such miraculous deeds is the Koran whose miraculousness does not rest merely upon authority (as-sam') as in the case of converting the stick into ^{hadhin} snake; but rests rather on the evidence of perception and reflection alike. Its unique miraculousness, is, therefore, so glaringly perceptible that it can be verified by all men at all times. (74)

The special predilection of Muslim theologians for the status of the Koran as miracle, in an absolute sense, is too well-known to need repetition here. Throughout the centuries, these

theologians, in their apologetic controversies, have always fallen back on this 'greatest of miracles' as the ultimate ground of their belief in the genuineness of its supernatural origin and the authenticity of the Prophet Muhammad's claims to be the vehicle through which, as the Word of God, it was revealed to men. (75)

This is what is called 'I'jaz al-Qoran', the miraculousness of the Koran. We cannot of course undertake to examine this thesis of 'I'jaz' here, or the validity of the claims embodied in this thesis. It is, in fact, a problem which cannot be settled here whether any miracle can authenticate itself in isolation ^{from} its historical context, or from the inevitable reference it must have to the supernatural. It is doubtful whether any miracle has probative force, in se; so as to be the absolute guarantee of the authenticity of the supernatural claims with which it is loaded. And although miracle must play a prominent role in the process of authenticating these claims, its probative force is not absolute because it is not the sole authenticating evidence of these claims. For if excessive emphasis on this role is placed, the Sceptic might always raise the initial problem: "What indeed is the ground of the necessary correlation between miracle and the claims with which it is loaded, as authenticating evidence?" A miracle is alleged to prove the genuineness of a prophet's supernatural claims; but this is ^{true only} on the assumption that miracle does prove this genuineness. A miracle is alleged to prove that a prophet is a prophet, that is, because he can perform miracles; that he can perform miracles, on the other hand, because he is a prophet. Thus we have not escaped in this argument the predicament of circular

(76)
reasoning.

That a miracle cannot authenticate itself in isolation from the the complex of conditions into which it is interwoven flows from a further circumstance: the circumstance, namely that a miracle once it is historically authenticated must answer, when considered per se, to a series of conditions without which no possibility of distinction between the magical, the fraudulent and the miraculous would remain. This would naturally raise the fundamental question as to what it is which constitutes miracle in the genuine sense; and whatever our answer to this question, the argument from 'stylistic perfection' (77) is too naive to be seriously entertained. as a philosophic solution of the problem of miracle, in its bearing on the alleged supernatural origin of divinely revealed scripture.

Yet the grounds of the Averroist special concession in behalf of the miraculousness of the Koran are not to be sought in the special validity of its claims to be miracle in an absolute sense. Rather must they be sought in the Averroist desire to give a plausible naturalistic justification of the validity of miracle. His distinction between phenomena possible-in-themselves, although not possible for the generality of men and phenomena impossible absolutely, as well as the special and unique instance of the Koran in its profession to be genuine miracle, lend a striking verisimilitude to his position. We are, of course, far from holding with the extreme advocates of divine omnipotence that the Almighty can effect His miraculous designs in defiance of the very

laws of reason. Because, as Al-Ghazali and Aquinas both teach with Averroes, the irrational is simply impossible, even for the Almighty Himself. ⁽⁷⁸⁾ Yet it is a grave illusion to confuse the supernatural with the irrational or the self-contradictory; that is, with that which is impossible- in-itself because impossible-in-reason. And miracle ought to have a supernatural content to justify the special role it plays in the complex of revelation. If we empty miracle of this supernatural content with which it is normally loaded, we are left with nothing but an extraordinary phenomenon which is incapable of insertion into the natural process and, at the same time, is without special theological relevance. But this is the very definition of magic and sorcery, if such can be historically shown to exist. And although the evidence for such existence is not wanting, historically authenticated miracles would have no other status than that of magic or sorcery.

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The problem of miracle in its relation to the supernatural is only one instance of the wider problem of religion in its relation to the supernatural as its ultimate ground and justification. What has been said about emptying miracle of its supernatural content can now be said, in broader terms, about religion in general. A religion which is divested of special reference to the supernatural can have either of two characters: it would be either an ethic or a metaphysic, depending on the emphasis it lays on the speculative or practical interests of man. Such, for instance, is the nature of

Confucianism and Stoicism, on the one hand, and of Hinduism and Neo-Platonism, on the other, (79) But it is only through phenomena and confusion that certain thinkers identify the religious with the ethical or the metaphysical. The ultimate ground of this identification is the failure to perceive the distinctively religious in religion. For it is indisputable that a religion which can lay a genuine claim for being a religion, must needs have regard to the life and destiny of man in his totality. Therefore its profession cannot fail to impinge upon man's moral being, by reason of the moral dynamism which the spirit works inwardly in the heart. In this manner, the life of virtue is seen to receive its flowering in a life of holiness which transcends the plane of natural virtue and sanctifies it from within. The spirit plays in this process of ethical transcendence, the role of energising principle, one might even say, the role of ethical creation and fashioning. Nor can genuine religion be without metaphysical grounding; because it cannot dissociate itself, or the role it plays in the life of man, from the structure of reality and of man's perception of this structure. But in neither case are we dealing with the distinctively religious in religion; otherwise, religion would be altogether superfluous. The ethical and the metaphysical are integrated into the religious as the underlying substructure; or better, as the 'organic framework' of which the religious is the 'soul'. (80) Thus is revealed the distinctively religious in religion as that which emanates from a supernatural source, illuminates the natural from within, and establishes in the soul of man a dynamic, whose source and

direction are beyond man. In other words, as that which is the free outpouring into the soul of man of the spiritual energy of grace. In the external drama of history, this dynamic takes the form of a supernatural providence. Now in both cases, in that of grace and that of providence, in the external and the internal working of the spirit, God is the sovereign source and sustainer.

For Averroes, however, the prospect of such incursion of the supernatural into the natural order is unthinkable. The two poles (81) within which his thought revolves are Aristotelian determinism and Ash'arite occasionalism. But the precariousness of the Ash'arite metaphysics is so repugnant to him that he refuses to entertain for a moment either its contents or the motives underlying its formulation. In their desire to rationalize miracle the Ash'arites were led to formulate a metaphysic according to which God intervenes in the cosmic order, at every instant of its life. Miracle is rationally possible, according to this metaphysic, because God intervenes directly in every natural operation and in every natural phenomenon. This, in the last analysis, is Al-Ghazali's own justification of miracle in rational terms. But witness here the paradox of Al-Ghazali's solution of the problem of miracle. If miracle is described as an extraordinary event arising out of the direct impingement of the supernatural on the natural realm; that is, of God's immediate intervention in a historical situation here and now, then the manner in which every natural event, on the assumptions of Al-Ghazali and the Ash'arites, comes about is miraculous in this exact sense.

Yet the significance of miracle in its character as probative evidence consists precisely in this: that miracle is a unique event in the series of cosmic events, a positive departure from the normal course of things. In this uniqueness is grounded its efficacy as proving evidence -, not indeed that the unique is always miraculous, but rather on account of its emergence in a manner and at a time when this emergence is least suspected, through the spontaneous determination of God's sovereign decree. And this spontaneous determination has efficacy because of its avowed reference to the supernatural designs of God and His absolute power. Theistic occasionalism, as conceived by Al-Ghazali and the Ash'arites has not succeeded, therefore, in giving a rational account of miracle which promises to safeguard the unity of the natural process. Instead it has dissolved the very meaning of the miraculous and the extraordinary by reducing it to the status of the natural and the ordinary; or what amounts to the same thing, by reducing the natural and the ordinary to the status of the miraculous. This is the wages of false dialectic: the dialectic which proves too little in proving too much.

Yet the motives of the Ash'arite doctors in formulating this metaphysic are certainly genuine. God can intervene directly in the cosmic process whenever such gracious intervention is dictated by the sovereign precepts of His love and His wisdom. Philosophy must accept the fact of this intervention, once it is historically authenticated, as part of the data out of which its picture of the

universe must be framed. We have already hinted that philosophy cannot undertake legitimately to call into account the fact of miracle, with a view to affirming or denying it. Nor can it disallow the possibility of miracle on a priori grounds, because it cannot be fitted into a metaphysical pattern contrived a priori. The fact of miracle falls outside the pole of metaphysical speculation: it is a problem for the historian not the metaphysician. to settle! The task of the metaphysician, once the fact of miracle has been historically ascertained, is to contrive a metaphysical pattern into which the heterogeneous and the extraordinary can be inserted without violence to the integrity of its structure; since the heterogeneous and the extraordinary are as genuine constituents of the real as the homogeneous and the ordinary. It is true an occasionalist account of miracle threatens to defeat its own ends and is, in any case, rationally indefensible. But whatever account we opt for, once occasionalism is dismissed as untenable, must meet the demands inherent in the problem of miracle and of God's extraordinary intervention in history. And this is precisely where the Averroist critique of Ash'arite occasionalism spends its strength away in ill-counselled polemic.

The root of the Averroist error is the absolute intellectualism and determinism which permeate all Averroes's philosophic writings. We will examine the nature of this intellectualism first, as set forth in the tract on 'the Agreement between Philosophy and Theology' and the Tahafut. (82) Here we find the substance of what

went into Mediaeval thought as the Averroist theory of the Two-Truths,

which played such a notorious role in the theological and philosophic controversies of the later half of the 13th. Century and which led finally to the condemnation of Averroism in 1277 by the ecclesiastical authorities. ⁽⁸³⁾ In his tract on the agreement between philosophy and theology (*Fasl al Maqal*), Averroes distinguishes three species of knowledge: demonstrative (*burhani*), dialectical (*jadali*) and rhetorical ⁽⁸⁴⁾ (*khitabi*). To the first species belong forms of reasoning which rest upon indubitable premisses which can be arrived at only after painstaking study and training in the speculative disciplines. To the second belong forms of reasoning which rest on premisses which are commonly known or believed (*mash-hurah* or *maznunah*), but are not necessarily self-evident or ⁽⁸⁵⁾ apodeictic.

This distinction between these three forms of reasoning tallies perfectly with Aristotle's own account of the matter. ⁽⁸⁶⁾ With Aristotle, however, the distinction is of purely logical character; that is, is a distinction which has regard to the inner stringency of propositions and syllogisms considered in themselves. Averroes exploits this distinction, instead, for theological purposes; and herein consists the originality of his treatment of the subject. To this threefold division of 'modes of reasoning', argues Averroes, there corresponds a threefold distinction between the common run of men (*al-jumhur al-ghalib*), the theologians and the philosophers -, a distinction which is parallel to the distinction between the three corresponding disciplines: philosophy, speculative theology and rhetoric. ⁽⁸⁷⁾ This classification can ultimately be reduced to a two-fold classification: the people of demonstration (^{ahl} *al-burhan*) on the one hand, and the common generality of men, on the other. We have here the famous classification, inaugurated by Ibn-Tofail

(Abubacer) in 'Hayy ibn Yaqzan', of men in to the 'specially gifted' (ashab al-fitan al-fa'iqah) and the generality of men (al-jumhur al-gha'ib), This classification, as is well-known, became conclusively enshrined in Spanish-Arabian thought long before Averroes; and it is in it that the origin of the theory of the two-truths ought to be sought. It recurs in Ibn-Badjah (Avempace) and in all Spanish philosophy, and is accepted by philosophic opinion as an indubitable postulate.

Now, on the surface of it, this theory seems quite innocuous; Men are divided, in point of fact, into the specially gifted and the common generality of men; but it is the implications of this theory which are philosophically and morally revolting. From the moral standpoint, this theory amounts to the establishment of a 'closed philosophic caste-system'; since it leaves no possibility of transition from one category into the other, and this reduces the qualitative distinction between men into a quasi-natural or quasi-biological distinction, as in the case of the threefold classification of society in Plato's Republic. From the philosophic standpoint, it amounts to the relegation of theology into a subordinate position and the installation of reason as the ultimate tribunal in conflicts where faith is involved, as will become clear in the sequel.

Throughout the whole tract on the Agreement between Philosophy and Theology, Averroes insists that philosophy is the foster-sister of theology; ⁽⁸⁸⁾ that the truth can never contradict the truth, and therefore no conflict can arise between philosophy and theology.

But when Averroes proceeds to develop this thesis and to specify the relationship 'of right' which ought to exist between theology and philosophy, his sympathies are displayed in a naked way. No sooner has he stated as an a priori dictum that the truth can never contradict the truth than he finds himself face-to-face with the actual reality of this conflict which is too glaring to be slurred over with so much dispatch. In perfect consistence with himself, he resorts to the time-hallowed expedient of explaining such a conflict away by pronouncing it a purely apparent conflict, not a genuine one. But without disputing his honesty in making this assertion, the critic cannot fail to observe, upon a closer scrutiny of the implications of this assertion, that this expedient is a sheer gesture of good will which carries with it no rational weight. It is an a priori presumption which cannot be validated from the standpoint of the Averroist system itself. The impossibility of this validation is rooted in the failure of Averroes to achieve a genuine delineation of the ~~re~~pective, ~~a~~utonomous spheres of theology and philosophy; that is, between faith and reason, or to specify the exact manner in which they are mutually related. And this is the inevitable burden of Averroes's absolute intellectualism. Instead of a distinction between the domains of reason and faith, Averroes establishes a subordination, in which the integrity of faith is sacrificed and the claims of theology allowed to be usurped by reason. Thus theology and philosophy, the domains of faith and reason, instead of being generically distinguished, at least with regard to the grounds of their validity if not with

respect to their positive contents, are pronounced homogeneous in scope and in metaphysical grounding. Here the afore-mentioned distinction between the three species of reasoning re-emerges to lend support to reason in its claims for usurping the rights of faith. For this distinction, as we have seen, is not vertical but rather horizontal. Demonstrative knowledge is superior in character to the dialectical knowledge of speculative theology, because more certain. Now apart from the derogation of the certainty of revealed theology which this thesis entails, it is visible how in any conflict between philosophy and theology, between reason and faith, reason is inevitably bound to carry it over faith. In this manner, the fate of faith is sealed beyond redemption, and the authority of revelation reduced to the plane of dialectical-sophistical reasoning. This is how Averroes urges that in the event of conflict between theology and philosophy, recourse must be had to rational interpretation (ta'wil).⁽⁸⁹⁾ But inasmuch as this interpretation is not confined to the pure explicitation of the contents of revealed truth, reason becomes the ultimate tribunal in conflicts wherein it is implicated as party and arbiter. Thus the unqualified hegemony of reason here vindicated has left no scope for the independent validity of revelation, as a mode of knowledge *shar'iyah* authenticating itself in a manner generically distinct from demonstrative or dialectical knowledge, by virtue of its reference to the Truth which is the fountain head of revealed knowledge, and indeed of ^{rational} knowledge itself. Theology in this way becomes an inferior species of speculative knowledge, whose tenets can be entertained

as relatively valid, on account of the pragmatic utility that accrues to professing them by the unreasoning masses; rather than on any intrinsic grounds of genuine validity. (90)

It is here evident how imperative is the exact demarcation of the boundaries of the contiguous territories of reason and faith, if the integrity of revealed theology is to be safeguarded. Indeed, whoever takes the truths of revealed theology seriously cannot fail to acknowledge the irreducibility of its claims for absolute validity. There can be no question here of a relative or comparative certainty of revealed truth, when contrasted with demonstrative truth. If revealed truth is genuine truth, then it is at least as certain as rational truth. Critical scepticism might, of course, call into question this genuineness; but once this genuineness is ascertained or conceded, there can be no more question of partial or absolute certainty. Critical scepticism, that is to say, can have regard merely to the initial process of acceptance or rejection of genuine revelation. But the moment this acceptance has been granted, revealed truth becomes incorporated into the body of beliefs and convictions which the believer accepts as irreducible, regardless of the manner in which this stage of belief has been attained and regardless, in fact, of the source or origin from which an admittedly genuine truth flows. In very simple terms, there is absolutely no difference, in point of strength, between truth and truth, when formally envisaged.

Thus, we believe, there lurks an insidious presumption in the contention of scepticism, that revealed truth is designed for

the salvation of the vulgar, and the innermost secrets of ^{that} truth (91) are reserved only to the specially gifted. Because such presumption is inspired by the desire to derogate ^{from} of the integrity and the absoluteness of revealed truth. At heart, its opponents profess belief in its tenets merely as a subterfuge, or at best, as a prudent counsel of secure credulity in the face of the conflicting claims of rational dialectic. Of course, we do not presume here to convict the proponents of this thesis individually, or to expose to suspicion their sincerity in adhering to it. For in these matters, judgment rests with God, who alone can read the secrets of the human heart. Yet such is the wages of the failure to discern the two distinct spheres of theology and philosophy: theology is either pronounced co-terminous with philosophy in scope, or its claims are dismissed as groundless. In both cases the validity of its positive claims is impaired and its authority and validity radically compromised. In the former case, because it is inevitably subordinated to the authority of reason and reduced to sheer rational dialectic; in the latter, because it is thrust out of the domain of the rational altogether.

The solution of the problem, as Thomas Aquinas perceived, consists precisely in the emancipation of revealed theology from the jurisdiction of reason altogether, both with respect to its extraction and the grounds of its validity. Reason can, of course, undertake and ^{it} explication of the contents of revealed theology, prepare the grounds for its acceptance, and rebut any specious arguments adduced

in combating it. But beyond this reason cannot go: it cannot determine a priori the contents of revelation nor can it load it with a greater measure of certitude. Its contents and its certitude are intrinsic to itself, by reason of the supernatural mode of its emanation. (92) But this is to say ^{that} the tenets of revealed theology transcend reason without violating it; since they flow from a supernatural source, who is the Guarantor of their authenticity, no less than the authenticity of rational knowledge itself, in its reference to the absolute Truth. (93) In this manner the autonomous spheres of reason and faith are properly distinguished, and their respective rights properly determined.. Therefore, neither can arrogate to itself what belongs by right to the other; nor can a conflict, in the strict sense, arise between reason and faith inasmuch as the respective spheres of their jurisdiction are distinct from one another. These spheres can interpenetrate in more than one direction, but this interpretation is not synonymous with encroachment; because it does not entail any violation of the principles of their reciprocal relationship. (94)

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The negation of the possibility of assigning any rational grounds to miracle is the consequence of the absolute intellectualism of Averroes and his refusal to allow for the incursion of the heterogeneous and the supernatural, on grounds pertaining to the homogeneous character of knowledge. The same refusal is equally maintained on grounds pertaining to the homogeneous character of being. (95) Epistemologically and metaphysically, that is to say,

the admission of miracle, Averroes believes, threatens to impair the unity and integrity of the cosmic order, in its objective and subjective aspects. We have already seen, in a general way, how the epistemological pre-suppositions of Averroism, militate against the notion of miracle. We now turn to the examination of the deterministic pre-suppositions of his metaphysics in their bearing on this problem.

The perusal of the clauses embodied in the condemnation of Latin Averroism in 1277, as we have seen, brings out in vivid relief the two most specious implications of Averroism, as the Christian West saw it. These are the Averroist doctrine of the unity of the intellect and its consequences for personal immortality and personal merit and reward; and the metaphysical determinism of Averroism and its inimical bearing on faith in divine providence. (96) The former Averroist error represents the original contribution of Averroes to the Aristotelian problem of the active-passive intellect. The pre-Averroist, Arabian Peripatetics had solved the problem in a manner which left scope for belief in separate, personal immortality. The Avicennian psychology, for instance, does not threaten in the least the personal immortality of man. (97) Nor does Al-Farabi's interpretation of the Aristotelian notion of the 'active intellect' go very far beyond the Master towards ascribing to it, a distinct universal mode of existence independently from the individual soul. That is why it does not figure in the Ghazalian polemic against the Peripatetics. But the latter thesis, bound up as it is with the cardinal metaphysical pre-suppositions of Aristotelianism itself is combat~~ed~~ed with unsparing vehemence by Al-Ghazali on account of

its inimical consequences to the notion of divine volitional activity and the possibility of God's occasionalist intervention in the cosmic process. It will become clear in the course of our discussion of Averroist determinism and the Ghazalian polemic that the error of Averroism, grievous as it is, is grounded in a metaphysical postulate which is absolutely irreducible, this is the postulate of an imperative 'rational determinism', presiding over the activity of the Almighty. Yet Al-Ghazali, in the vehemence of his polemic, fails to perceive the imperativeness of this postulate and, therefore, succumbs to the opposite error of absolute voluntarism. But neither of these two errors, absolute determinism and absolute voluntarism, can be reconciled with an adequate conception of the divine being or of divine activity. If Averroist determinism threatens to tie down the hands of the Almighty, as it were, and reduce him to thralldom to reason, Ghazalian voluntarism, on the other hand - promises to restore the liberty of the Almighty at the cost of His intellectual integrity, By reducing Him to the status of a capricious despot, the counsel of whose providence is a counsel of folly.

Yet whatever the exact worth of the Ghazalian critique and whatever the naiveness of his reading of the Peripatetic teaching on the mode of divine activity, his motives in combatting the determinism of Neo-Platonic emanationism are commendable. In its basic aspect, the Ghazalian thesis is valid, despite the flimsy metaphysical cloak in which it is draped and its close kinship to

anthropomorphism. Al-Ghazali argues that divine activity ought to be described as voluntary activity, because there inheres in God a quality of positive determination with regard to opposites; and this is the definition of will. ⁽⁹⁸⁾ The Neo-Platonists misunderstand

the nature of this activity, therefore, when they describe it as a mode of necessary procession of the creatures from the Creator, as in the case of the procession of the effect from the cause, the light from the sun. ⁽⁹⁹⁾ Averroes meets this charge, as we have seen, by pointing out that divine activity can neither be described as voluntary or as involuntary or natural; but it is rather a mode of activity, sui generis, whose modality is incomprehensible. Otherwise we are caught up in the predicament of anthropomorphism.

Averroes' teaching on this question, as we have seen, coincides with the teaching of Aquinas. ⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ But unlike Aquinas, he nowhere concedes the predicability of will to God, not even with the proviso that a transcendent modality must be assigned to such a will. Aquinas encounters no difficulty in predicating 'anthropomorphic' attributes to God; since a transcendent mode of predication is reserved to God in every case, as the proper (or primary) subject of all positive, ontological predicates; whose title for such predication is prior to the title of the creatures themselves. Will, knowledge, power, etc. are not predicable of God, because they are predicable of the creatures. They are rather predicable of the creatures, because, in the first instance, they are predicable of God, in whose ⁽¹⁰¹⁾ perfections the creature participates.

The metaphysical determinism latent in the Averroist system is best

visible in the Averroist thesis respecting the eternity of the world and of matter, the impossibility of an effective divine providence and the Neo-Platonic world-scheme which he tacitly endorses. (102) We can only touch briefly here on these three grand themes of Averroism, in their bearing on the problem with which we are here concerned. Both from the historical standpoint and from the standpoint of general philosophical and theological speculation, the problem of the eternity of the world represents the dividing-line between creative determinism and creative voluntarism, with which creation ex nihilo is bound up. The centrality of this problem is, of course, independent of the manner in which a solution can be adduced thereto. Whether, that is to say, we maintain with the Ash'arites, Al-Ghazali and Albert the Great that a speculative solution of the problem is possible, or deny this possibility with Maimonides and Aquinas, on the ground that this solution must be sought in the order of faith rather than the order of speculation -, is immaterial to the metaphysical and theological corollaries we derive from it. What gives the problem of the eternity of the world its entire acuteness is the circumstance that it introduces a necessary determinism into the primordial genesis of the cosmic order, grounded in the dualist metaphysics which it must necessarily endorse, as with Aristotle and Averroes. In this dualism, there inheres an inevitable derogation of the creative role of God, on account of the limitation on His creative resourcefulness involved in the positing of a co-eternal principle of indeterminate possibility

out of which He fashions the universe. For in this perspective, God is not conceived as Agent in an absolute sense; but rather as the Agent of becoming or mutation only, inasmuch as His activity consists merely in bringing out into a state of actuality the virtual possibilities latent in Prime Matter. (103)

This statement of the matter must, perhaps, be qualified slightly. Because it is inaccurate, in one sense, to say that Aristotelian-Averroist Hylomorphic Dualism sets a positive limitation on the free operation of the creative might of God, since the Matter, which Aristotle and Averroes set up as a principle co-eternal with God has no determinate being independently from the Pure Form, and is, in any case, shorn of any specific determinations whereby it can withstand the form-giving impact of the Pure Act, as in the case of Platonic 'matter'. But even then there is implicit in this Hylomorphic Dualism a positive derogation of the infinity of God's power, in His capacity as the Source of all Being. Matter, evidently, on the assumptions of Aristotle and Averroes, is not nothing. Therefore, it is manifestly endowed with a certain mode of being, however minimal; and this being it does not owe to the source of all Being. As the potential substratum out of which the creation is fashioned, it represents the substratal ingredient without which the Demiurge is incapable of fashioning the products of his creative fancy. And in this manner, the scope of God's creative resourcefulness is seen to balk at the threshold of a sphere of pre-natal possibility into which the creative might of God cannot enter; because like a tangent sphere its circumference touches the sphere

of God(s creative power without coinciding with it.

The eternity of the world and of matter was never defended with such staunch resolution as it was by Averroes; not even by Aristotle himself, who confesses in more than one place in his writings, the dialectical difficulties involved in the thesis of an eternal universe. (104) The Averroist reading of the Aristotelian teaching on this question is in continuity with the tradition of Arabian Peripatetism; notably, the Peripatetism of Al-Farabi and Avicenna. It was this faithfulness to the spirit of the 'master' which exposed the great Peripatetics of the East to the inveterate attacks of Ash'arite theologians. Al-Ghazali's polemic against this doctrine in the First Disputation of the Tahafut leaves no doubt regarding the grievous perniciousness attached to it, in its bearing on the doctrine of creation ex nihilo. It is true, the Ash'arites and Al-Ghazali, obsessed by the dread of this perniciousness, succumb to the temptation of facile dialectic and set out to demonstrate the beginning of the world in time, as though it was the easiest thing in the world. Their reasoning, as we have seen in Maimonides's critique, (105) does not proceed beyond the dialectic of circularity. If the world is created, (Hadith) they argued, then it must have a beginning in time (Hadith); must be created, that is to say. Now the world is created, ergo, it is created and consequently has a beginning in time. But this is precisely what the argument is designed to prove in a genuinely stringent manner. And Ash'arite dialectic has not made a single step forward in the direction of such a stringent proof.

In confuting the arguments adduced by Al-Ghazali against the Arabian Peripatetics, Averroes makes certain metaphysical concessions which he considers congruous with the genuine teaching of Aristotle, allowing himself in this way to line up with Al-Ghazali against Al-Farabi and Avicenna. Such for instance is the concession he makes over the Neo-Platonic account of the mode of the emanation of the multiple from the One. (106) His view on the incomprehensible, though transcendent, mode of divine activity represents similarly an advance on Avicenna's in the direction of theistic voluntarism. He likewise censures the Avicennian teaching on the determinism inhering in the activity of the 'celestial souls', etc. (107) But over the question of the eternity of the world, he is absolutely adamant. It is true he nowhere expresses explicit belief in the eternity of the world; it is true also that in the tract on the Agreement between Philosophy and Theology, he gives the reader to believe that he adheres to the view that time is co-created with the universe; (108) yet his whole procedure in the Tahafut and elsewhere in exposing the sophistical fallacies implicit in Al-Ghazali's argument against the Peripatetics, as well as the mastery and enthusiasm he displays in this exposure, can scarcely be said to leave any doubt as to where his real sympathies lie. The three main points around which the issue centers in the First Disputation of Tahafut is the question of an infinite regress, the eternity of time and of movement, and finally the eternity of the material substratum of the universe.

1. With respect to the impossibility of an infinite regress, which Al-Ghazali adduces in support of the thesis that the world

must have a beginning in time, it is to be noted, Averroes remarks, that it is only the 'infinite per se' which is impossible. The 'infinite per accidens' (ghair mutana^hin bil'aradh), according to the Peripatetics, is quite possible, on the other hand. Such, for instance, is the case of beings the corruption of which is a condition in the generation of others. Thus it is necessary to posit, alongside the Unmoved Mover, who is eternal and unchanging, a Movable Mover, who is subject to mutation in space, but whose motion is endless. This 'Prime Movable' or First Heaven, ⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ is the direct cause of all cosmic movement and becoming. ⁽¹¹⁰⁾ The argument of Al-Ghazali for the beginning of the world in time from the impossibility of an infinite regress rests therefore upon a false conditional premiss.

2. The eternity of the world is bound up with the eternity of time and of motion. With respect to the former, it can be urged, with perfect consistency, that God could have created the universe at a period in time, prior to the period in which it was actually created - as Al-Ghazali himself concedes -, that He could have created it at an antecedent time, and so on ad infinitum. Now to such assumptions there must correspond a real quantum, as the measure of the pre-figured extension, prior to the creation of the world; and this real quantum is time. ⁽¹¹¹⁾ Al-Ghazali, however, after expounding this argument, proceeds to refute it through analogy with space. But his procedure is illegitimate, because it is impossible to assume a greater or smaller spatial magnitude

of the universe than its actual magnitude; inasmuch as this would entail the fallacy of an actual, infinite magnitude. (112) The arbitrary decree of God to bring the universe into being at the special time he has chosen to do so does not strengthen the case of the Ash'arites and of Al-Ghazali; because this would derogate ^{from} of God's power and resourcefulness. For manifestly, it is more consistent with the notion of God's absolute power and perfection to assume that He is capable of acting continually. And since His being is not circumscribed by time, his activity which is consequent upon His being, can have no determinate temporal conditions. (113)

With respect to the eternity of motion, the Peripatetics argue, the notion of incipient movement is absurd, as regards the whole universe. An incipient existence (huduth) entails clearly an antecedent existent as the subject of the incipient condition of existence. To posit an incipient existent (hadith), therefore, amounts to positing an existent preceding its own existence, which is absurd. The notion of movement therefore cannot be divorced from the notion of eternity. (114)

3. We can, finally, envisage the eternity of the world from the standpoint of matter, as the substratum of eternal 'possibility' and of eternal movement. In restating the problem against the attacks of Al-Ghazali, Averroes leaves no doubt respecting his conviction in its incontrovertible certainty. And it is in fact, difficult to see how the Aristotelian conception of movement in terms of process from act to potency, as well as the general,

cardinal distinction between act and potency, which represents the foundation-stone of the Aristotelian metaphysics, can abandon the thesis of the eternity of matter as the subject of eternal movement and possibility. In the first place, movement, as the above argument shows, is inseparable from a substratum of movement, which is eternal in the exact manner movement itself is eternal. (115)

The very notion of movement involves its eternity; for motion is a form of change, and change is a process from potency to act. In Aristotle's own famous words; "Motion is the fulfillment of the movable in so far as it is movable" (116); that is "the fulfillment of what exists potentially, in so far as it exists potentially." (117)

But this presupposes a (movable' which has always been at motion; for it s incipient motion would be inexplicable, unless a 'beginning of this motion is assumed; and this beginning itself - as change from rest to motion - must be the outcome of an antecedant motion. Eternal motion has thus to be pre-supposed, the moment it is conceded that motion exists. The actualization of the potentiality of the movable -, whereby initial motion arises, must be pre-supposed throughout, even when it is gratuitously assumed that motion has a beginning. (118)

of that
But let us consider now movement from the standpoint in which it inheres. It is clear that the world, prior to creation, was always possible (mumkin); otherwise it would never have come to be. (119)
Now possibility can have regard either to the patient (qabil) or to the agent (fa'il). Possibility-in-the-patient is a pre-requisite condition in the capacity of the agent; inasmuch as the agent cannot do the impossible. This possibility cannot inhere in no-substratum,

nor in the agent, nor in the possibility itself; since the possible is that which is in the process of becoming actual. It remains that the subject (*hamil*) of possibility is something which is susceptible of possibility, and this is matter. But matter does not come to be in so far as it is matter; because then we would have to assume a matter of this matter and so on ad infinitum. Matter-in-becoming (*maddah mutakawwinah*) is, in fact, the state of the composite in becoming; since things come to be in so far as they are composed of matter and form. If we assume that everything comes to be out of something else, then we would have to assume an infinite succession of emergents in an infinite matter; and this is absurd since it amounts to the admission of an actual infinite. Therefore we have to admit that 'forms' supervene successively upon a substratum, which neither comes to be nor perishes and that this succession is circular and eternal. Consequently it is not Not-Being which is the subject of becoming, but rather something which bears (*hamil*) the contrary forms; and this is matter. (120)

In rebutting this argument of the Peripatetics, Al-Ghazali urges that possibility, like impossibility, is a purely rational notion to which nothing needs correspond in reality. For avowedly there is nothing to correspond to the impossible (*al-mumtani'*) in concrete reality. But this rebuttal, retorts Averroes, rests on a sheer sophism. All genuine concepts must have something corresponding to them in the sphere of objective reality (*kharij annafs*). The impossible, no less than the possible, requires a real entity to which to correspond; because the impossible is the contrary of the

possible and contraries must have a common substratum. Now contraries stand to each other in the position of Being to not-Being, inasmuch as the one is the privation of the other. But manifestly, it is not not-Being per se (nafs al-'adam) which becomes Being ; nor Being 'per se' which becomes not-Being. Consequently the subject of becoming must be a 'tertium quid' of which possibility and generation are predicable. Becoming and possibility are obviously impredicable either of not-Being or of actualized Being. (121) This 'tertium quid' as the subject of becoming and the alternation of opposites must be in potency for the reception of actual forms, and accidents without itself being actual in any way. Were it an existent in act (mawjud bilfi'l) there would be no sense in speaking of the coming-to-be of things; since coming-to-be is a process of transition from not-Being to Being. (122)

Creation ex nihilo is therefore wholly irrational. All change is transition from act to potency; and the coming-to-be of things is no exception. In a famous passage in his commentary on the 12th Book of the Metaphysics, (123) Averroes re-affirms this thesis against the Mutakallims' doctrine of creation ex nihilo, in the name of genuine Aristotelianism. Here as in Tahafut, the role of the First Cause is reduced to the role of the Agent who brings things into Being out of the immanent potentiality of Matter and imprints upon the cosmic order the impress of order and harmony.

It is here evident how Averroes' integral acceptance of the Hylo-morphic Dualism of Aristotle leads him to the endorsement of the allied Aristotelian notion of an eternal Prime Matter, which is the abiding substratum of becoming and change in the universe. Nowhere

does he seem to show any signs of wavering or doubt over this question. It is true both in Tahafut and in Fasl al-Maqal), he endeavours to ward off the charge of infidelity. (kufr) levelled on the proponents of the eternity of the world, either by pointing (124) the dialectical difficulties involved in its affirmation or negation, or by drawing a subtle distinction between creation as continuous production (ihdath da'im) and creation as discontinuous production (ihdath mungati'). But all this leaves totally unimpaired his conviction in the metaphysical stringency of the doctrine of the eternity of the world. And what is more, he finds nothing abnoxious in its admission to faith in the sovereignty and perfection of God. Rather is the notion of creation in time itself derogatory of this sovereignty and perfection, because it limits God's activity to one (125) mode of creation; that is creation in time, as with the Ash'arites, and reduces Him to a state of idle inactivity, throughout the infinite (126) period of time preceding the creation of the universe.

The eternity of the world and of matter, as well as the hylo-morphic, metaphysical pattern in which it is cast, thus completes the cycle of Aristotelian-Averroist determinism. At no point in this cycle can a heterogeneous element impinge upon the course of its autonomous movement. The Pure Act is as determined in its relation of reciprocity to Infinite Potency, as the latter in its desire for the ontological perfection with which the former is charged. Whatever movement is generated in the cosmos is thus seen to be caught between the two poles of a twofold determination.: the energy of the 'Act' and the fertility of Matter, which respond

to the call of one another like spouse and husband. Without this 'energy' Matter would remain barren and formless; without this 'fertility' Form would remain unfruitful because self-contained. In the domain of concrete existence at least, Form is a s dependant on Matter as Matter on Form, without whose conjugal union so to speak, (127) cosmic generation would be unthinkable.

This determinism, as we have hinted previously, can hardly leave scope for belief in an effective providence of God. Averroes, it is true, concedes that God plays the role of Author and Preserver of the universe ; (128) but it is difficult to see how this role can be interpreted in any but deistic terms. Averroes had disallowed the validity of the heterogeneous and supernatural as a conception sui generis, both with respect to faith and with respect to miracle. But it is not a deistic, 'initial providence' which is here at issue. This 'initial providence' is, of course, a desideratum of any adequate account of the universe in its dependence on God , as its Author; and over this question theism has no bones to pick with Aristotelian-Averroist deism; as with any honest deistic system for that matter. Theism, however, although it presupposes this providence tacitly, finds it insufficient for corroborating the claims of historical religions. Because, in the first place, these religions themselves are the manifestation of a historic providence sui generis; the manifestation, that is to say, of God's immediate intervention in history out of sheer condescending and gracious love. In this intervention there is implicit already the supercession, on the part of God, of ~~this~~ cosmically-imposed duty as Author and

Preserver of the universe. In the second place, these religions claim that God intervenes directly and immediately in the course of cosmic events with a view to executing His cosmic designs and implementing the decrees of His sovereign love. Such is the case of miracle, historic revelations, the commission of prophets, and finally the assumption of the human form by the Deity Himself. The speculative issue involved in this heterogeneous providence is not the purely logical or metaphysical account of what happens naturally in the natural realm. It is rather the issue regarding the supernatural and extraordinary impingement upon this realm of a heterogeneous dynamism rooted in God's generosity and love, rather than in the laws of the universe and the principles of its inner movement and self-development. And on this Averroes has nothing to say; because the issues arising out of this heterogeneous dynamism, he believes, are philosophically irrelevant.

Chapter Four.

The Causal Dilemma and the Thomist
Synthesis.

I

The Abstract Formula of the Causal Dilemma.

The problem of causality, seen through the Averroist-Ghazalian controversy, can be said to constitute a metaphysical dilemma of which deistic determinism and theistic occasionalism are the two false solutions. If we discard the web of antithetic contentions woven around this dilemma and view the problem in its stark concreteness, the issue is found to resolve itself into the problem of divine versus cosmic causality. On the assumptions of occasionalism and determinism alike, the twofold causality of the Creator and the creature is an irreducible datum of the texture of conditions in the midst of which cosmic events come to pass. No insight into the nature of causal operations can fail to admit the irreducible givenness of this twofold causality in which all cosmic dynamism and becoming are rooted. The admission of this twofold causality, it should be remarked at the outset, is independent of any metaphysical or theological world view into which causality is fitted; and likewise of any positive conception of the Deity, as First Cause, and the role He plays in the cosmic process. Deistic determinism posits God as the First cause of cosmic becoming and movement, without passing beyond the closed circle of self-contained cosmic life; that is, posits Him as the necessary condition of cosmic activity, the First Principle of cosmic becoming, without Whom the series of

cosmic conditions would be left totally unexplained. Occasionalism, on the other hand,- whatever its claims to demonstrate the existence of God from the conditions of contingent existence, starts by positing this existence a priori and thence proceeds to explain in terms of this existence the role of God as the Unique Agent in the universe. (1) But here, too, the reality of cosmic activity is conceded as an initial fact. That the occasionalist metaphysical justification of this tenet, owing to the specious pre-suppositions on which it rests, ends by explaining this fact away, does not affect the point at issue. Nor does the metaphysical account of the role which determinism assigns to the First Cause in the drama of cosmic becoming touch the reality or irreducibility of divine, as against cosmic causality. The causality of the Creator is said to run concurrently with the autonomous causality of the Creature, without impinging upon it or deflecting the course of its movement. But clearly the causality of the Almighty is conceded here, too, despite the implicit limitation on the scope of this causality. such a conception of the matter entails.

The Ghazalian-Averroist controversy, therefore, is an attempt to grapple with the causal dilemma from two antithetic standpoints. It is perhaps redundant, though highly important, to note that both Averroes and Al-Ghazali are pre-occupied with the same problem; and that they have, at least, so much in common: the initial and implicit admission of the irreducible fact of secondary as against primary causality. But the positive

contribution of Al-Ghazali and Averroes to the metaphysics of causality does not consist merely in raising the problem; for in this respect Al-Ghazali and Averroes are not as much as disagreed. And as these two great thinkers can scarcely be said to have envisaged the problem in vain, the critic might ask at this juncture: 'What ought we to retain of the Averroist and Ghazalian solutions of the causal dilemma? And what is the positive contribution of these two authors to the problem at issue?'

Of course no answer to this question can be given independently from a metaphysical synthesis distinct from the two syntheses here envisaged. For from the standpoint of these two syntheses the question is naturally meaningless. Viewed from within a metaphysical synthesis is always complete, even when it avows its own incompleteness on account of the incompleteness of its data or its scope. No honest and serious system of metaphysics, that is to say, can pronounce an indictment upon itself. Yet there is one respect in which such an answer is possible. From the abstract, critical standpoint a genuine problem is capable of a genuine solution, at least within the limited scope of the data involved in its formulation. Such a solution, however, can never be adequate, since adequacy is a quality of the total synthesis in its totality. What abstract criticism can aspire to achieve - as regards any metaphysical problem, is to specify the necessary conditions to which any hypothetical or abstract solution of that problem must answer, and the necessary metaphysical grounds of such a solution.

Now if the problem with which Averroes and Al-Ghazali are pre-occupied is a genuine problem and if their solutions, however incomplete, are genuine, then the critic is entitled to expect a positive contribution, however minimal, towards a final solution of the problem from both quarters. And it is indeed curious to note that such a contribution coincides exactly with those pre-suppositions of the two authors which we have criticized most vehemently in the course of our exposition of their respective systems. With respect to the Ghazalian system, it will be recalled, it was the very mode of God's intervention in every cosmic event at every instant of its life which we have censured as metaphysically indefensible. With respect to the Averroist system, it was the deterministic enshrinement of reason as the absolute 'logos' of divine activity and cosmic becoming which we found theologically inadmissible. But both the occasionalism of Al-Ghazali and the determinism of Averroes, far from being specious in principle, are indispensable for any adequate conception of the Deity and His role in the universe. It is only the extreme claims with which they are loaded which renders this occasionalism and this determinism metaphysically and theologically inadequate. From the standpoint of abstract, critical theology, it is imperative that God ought to be endowed with the attribute of infinite power. But this infinite power must be such as to be unlimited by any conditions inhering in the structure of the created order. But this is to say that God's infinite power, being disproportionate with the created order, has unlimited scope with respect to that order. God's extraordinary intervention in the cosmic sphere,

therefore, is rationally possible because God's power can never be circumscribed by the conditions of concrete existence. Nor can the mode of this intervention be determined by the laws of cosmic becoming, because the mode of operation of this infinite power, instead of being determined by these laws, is their primary determinant. In this we have the clue to the definition of volitional activity: namely, activity which stands to the patient as the determinant to its determined 'subject' and whose mode is rooted in the spontaneity of the agent. Thus the infinity of God's power, the voluntary mode of His activity, and the possibility of His extraordinary intervention in the course of cosmic events are rational desiderata of any adequate conception of God's sovereign perfection and His role in the universe. And here Al-Ghazali's theological reasoning is sound in principle, despite its flimsy metaphysical drapery.

The infinite power of God, however, has one limit inhering in the structure of the divine Being itself, if not in the structure of the created order. If God's power is absolute, as regards the created order, it is precisely because it is infinite and, therefore, disproportionate with the finite order over which it has infinite scope. Yet from the standpoint of the divine Being itself, power being merely one predicate of the divine perfection, is conditioned by God's other ^{essential} predicates, and notably His wisdom and His love. But this conditioning is not a limitation if by limitation is meant subordination or curtailment. It is purely the mode of operation of the divine Being, in the integral unfoldment

of His essence, in which analytical reasoning distinguishes wisdom, as the principle presiding over this operation; power as the energy flowing from this operation itself, ⁽²⁾ and love as the law of the spontaneous unfoldment of the divine goodness and the divine generosity. Thus the determinism inhering in divine activity is rooted in the Being of God Himself, Whose wisdom and love, as He is power and will; rather than in the being of the creation, which represents the external scene upon which divine activity is displayed. And here the determinism of Averroes is valid in principle; at least as far as its conception of the rationality of God's mode of operation goes.

Yet the rational determinism here postulated, although it accounts for the integral unfoldment of the divine essence in its inwardness, leaves unexplained the exteriorization of this essence in the sphere of outward activity and creation. Divine power might be infinite and divine wisdom might be supreme, but the question would still remain: 'Why should the divine essence unfold itself outwardly at all? And what is the ultimate ontological ground of the divine otherness, whereby God chooses freely to bring the creation out of nothing and thus to issue out of the inwardness of His self-sufficient, self-contained Being?'

Here we come upon the very limits of the Averroist and the Ghazalian solutions of the causal dilemma. Averroes answers the question in part by urging that creation, as the exteriority of the divine will, is grounded in a law of Reason to which God and the universe alike are subject. In this way, he closes the deterministic cycle in which the Creator and the creature are caught up. The

second half of the question, regarding God's providential intervention in the course of cosmic events, he dismisses as philosophically irrelevant; that is, pronounces it as a pseudo-philosophic question.. But Averroes has failed, in fact, to settle even the former half of the problem. The rational determinism which he postulates as the law of God's activity and of cosmic becoming is admittedly the law of this activity and this becoming, rather than the principle of the dynamic emanation of things from the bosom of God. Averroes has merely explained How God acts and How the universe develops its life-process, but not Why God should act at all in the manner He freely chooses. And this is the burden of his absolute determinism. But neither has Al-Ghazali succeeded in settling the causal problem in a satisfactory way. In contradistinction to Averroes, he answers the latter half of the question in a 'de facto' manner, by urging dogmatically and arbitrarily that God acts freely because He acts freely, and because the nature of divine power is such that He acts as He chooses to act. The determination of the 'de jure' ground of this activity he dismisses as irrelevant, by pronouncing it as a pseudo-theological problem. Neither the How nor the Why of the unfoldment of divine activity have thus been explained; and the problem has been surrendered dogmatically and agnostically, as insoluble.

From the abstract standpoint of critical theology, once more, a final solution of the causal problem in its foregoing formula must be sought in the perspective of an integral conception of the Deity, as Power, Wisdom and Love. To put the matter epitomatically,

the God of Al-Ghazali is Power, the God of Averroes is Wisdom, and that is all. No wonder neither can give a complete answer to the problem at issue. The ultimate ground of divine activity and the exteriorization of the divine will, as we shall see, is rooted in divine Love. Wisdom is only the law of this exteriorization and power the principle of its efficacy. The God-Despot of Al-Ghazali acts capriciously because He is capricious Power. The God-Philosopher of Averroes cannot even be said to act, owing to His total absorption in Himself and the contemplation of His essence. Yet neither a God, who acts capriciously, nor a God who is totally inactive, can be said to have any share in the fullness of the real Godhead.

We shall see when we turn to Thomas Aquinas that the causal problem is capable, with Him, of a solution in the very terms proposed above. The positive elements of theistic occasionalism and of deistic determinism, far from being surrendered, are incorporated into a complete synthesis in which the theological and metaphysical interests involved in the problem of God in His relationship to the universe are fully met and satisfied.

II

(3)

Aquinas and the Loquentes.

The alleged conflict between divine and cosmic causality grew, in Medieval theological speculation, in East and West, out of two seemingly irreconcilable notions: the notion of God's universal providence and the notion of the efficacy of natural causes. We have seen how in Islamic theology the Ash'arites and Al-Ghazali sacrifice the reality of the latter for the sake of the former and

how Averroes, on the other hand, denies the possibility of any effective divine providence owing to the deterministic pre-suppositions of his metaphysics, without - it is true - prejudicing the reality of natural causes.

In the Medieval West, the controversy which raged over Latin Averroism in the 13th. century comprised, in addition to the question of the unity of the intellect, the eternity of the world, the doctrine of the two-truths, etc. the problem of divine providence and determinism -, as attested by the condemnation of Latin Averroism in 1277.⁽⁴⁾ Aquinas seems to have had the proponents of Averroist determinism, on the one hand, and the proponents of Ash'arite occasionalism, on the other, in mind in his discussion of the problem of providence and causality in the Summa contra Gentiles and the De Potentia, and likewise, in the Summa Theologica.⁽⁵⁾ The question is treated with dramatic concreteness in the third book of the Summa contra Gentiles, on which our attention will be mainly concentrated. Here Aquinas is preoccupied with safeguarding the reality and universality of divine providence against the attacks of the Fatalists and the Determinists, who either, like the ancient Materialists, denied this Providence, or like the Peripatetics confined its scope to the world of incorruptible substances only.⁽⁶⁾ The providence of the Almighty, Aquinas teaches, embraces all things so that nothing in the universe happens outside the order of His providence or contrary to it, not excepting singular and contingent happenings.⁽⁷⁾ But this universal providence,⁽⁸⁾ contrary to the assumptions of the Stoics, is not

synonymous with necessity. Contingency, evil, liberty, of choice - even chance and fortune, rather than infringe the universal jurisdiction of that all-embracing providence, represent in fact a vindication of this providence in which contingency and evil are comprised as part of the sovereign designs of the Almighty. The negators of providence find in the glaring reality of evil in life the ground of their disbelief in God and their despair in the righteousness of His ways. (9) But it is on account of their misconception of the nature of providence and the role it plays in the drama of cosmic becoming that their faith in the reality or the universality of this providence is shaken by the perception of evil in life. If evil and contingency reveal an indeterminism in the providence of the Almighty, it is an indeterminism grounded in divine love and generosity, rather than in the inefficacy of His power or the limitation of His foresight and fore-ordination. God graciously allows the creature to subsist on its own and to develop its life-process freely, as part of the ultimate scheme of things enjoined by the dictates of His love and generosity. And it is in this latitude, born of divine love, that contingency and evil are rooted, rather than in the powerlessness of the Almighty. (10)

It is no less a misconception of the nature of divine providence to hold that no mode of necessity can be ascribed to the order of being it is said to govern. A totally contingent order of being is thought to strengthen the case for God's absolute power and sovereignty, as the Loquentes maintain. (11) Yet an order of contingent being, like that contrived by these Loquentes, which does

not endure for a single instant depends avowedly on God for its incipient coming-to-be only. Beyond this the providence and power of God do not go. But it is more in keeping with the notion of this providence to hold that its scope extends beyond the initial production of things and embraces them throughout the whole process of their production, as throughout the process of their subsistence in being. A mode of necessity can thus be ascribed to things from the standpoint of God's own sovereignty, the vindication of which a metaphysic of contingent being is designed to serve. The Loquentes are obviously pre-occupied with the vindication of this Sovereignty in the formulation of this metaphysic of contingency. But contrary to their expectations, this Sovereignty, far from being vindicated, is grievously impaired. The universe, as the workmanship of God, clearly bespeaks the might and perfection of its Author. It is true such a workmanship is far from being commensurate with the super-eminent perfection of its Author. Yet within the scope of the perfection freely assigned to it by the decrees of divine love, this universe is endowed with a measure of beauty and order which no scepticism can gainsay. Whatever detracts of this perfection, therefore, detracts of the perfection of its Author -, or in Aquinas's words: "To detract from the creature's perfection is to detract from the perfection of the divine power." Inasmuch as the repudiation of causal efficacy pertaining to things is a detraction from their perfection, it is equally a detraction from God's perfection: "since it is due to the abundance of its perfection that a thing is able to communicate to another the perfection that

(12)
it has"

Thus the Ash'arite metaphysics of accidents amounts to an impoverishment of the real and an infringement of the perfection of its Author. As we have seen at length in the second chapter, this metaphysics is implemented in terms of four major tenets which Aquinas subjects to severe scrutiny. These are the passivity or inertness of substances, the exclusive reference of all causal operations to God; the intransmissibility of accidents and the contention that all production is creation. (13) Aquinas, as we have seen, derived his knowledge about the occasionalism of the Mutakallims from Maimonides's 'Guide' with which he was fully familiar. His polemic against this occasionalism, as set forth in the Summa contra Gentiles and De Potentia, coincides in the main with the Maimonidean-Averroist polemic despite his ignorance of the Anti-Ash'arite polemic of Averroes in the Tahafut and the Kashf -, at least with respect to the metaphysical and epistemological implications of this occasionalism. (14) Such, for instance, is his argument that the negation of causality militates against the possibility of knowledge, especially in the physical science; inasmuch as the nature of the cause is known through the nature of the effect. (15) Such, too, is his argument that action is consequent upon being actual; that the 'form' is the principle of activity in transitive operations, (16) etc. But this, Averroes, Maimonides and Aquinas share in common as the common bequest of tradition al Aristotelianism. The uniqueness and originality of the Thomist critique of Ash'arite occasionalisms consists in its completeness; and in this respect, it represents a positive advance on the

Averroist critique. As we have hinted previously, the theistic occasionalism of Al-Ghazali and the Ash'arites sacrifices the metaphysical interests involved in the positive admission of causality as a primary predicate of being. Yet the rehabilitation of causality by Averroes, while it safeguards these interests, sacrifices the the theological interests underlying the formulation of this occasionalism and fails to give an adequate rational account for the possibility of God's direct intervention in the course of cosmic events, owing to the deterministic presuppositions upon which it rests. The merit of the Thomist solution of the causal dilemma consists precisely in this: that it does complete justice to the theological and metaphysical interests, underlying theistic occasionalism and deistic determinism alike.

The positive element in the Thomist synthesis, through which the solution of the causal dilemma is achieved is the notion of love. This element is of Christian, rather than of Greek extraction. We shall see, when we examine this notion of love, as the principle of the divine otherness and the exteriority of the divine will, that it is metaphysically affiliated to the Neo-Platonism of Dionysius the Areopagite. But it is in any case a notion sui generis which is not to be found either in Aristotle, Averroes or Maimonides. We have already said in the foregoing section that Averroism fails to fathom the depths of the mystery of divine otherness and activity altogether and thus posits a self-centered Deity who can hardly be said to act at all. The same charge can be levelled on Aristotle's own notion of God. And in this respect, Al-Ghazali's accusation, despite its naive anthropomorphic

implications, is a devastating accusation. From the standpoint of Aristotelianism and Averroism, it is indeed difficult to see why the Deity, who enjoys the everlasting bliss of contemplating His own essence, should utter Himself out in activity at all. A Deity, who is absolute wisdom needs not issue out of the orbit of self-contained existence at all; since it is within this orbit that the Deity fulfills His essence and attains the goal of His interior movement of self-contemplation. If creation, as an instance of the divine otherness and the exteriority of the divine will is postulated, then it ought to be grounded in a principle sui generis, distinct from wisdom altogether. And thus there must inhere in the divine Being a dynamic principle of outgoing generosity, whereby He communicates His being and His causality to the creature out of sheer and gracious love.

It can be safely maintained, we believe, that the notion of a dynamic divinity, as of a personal divinity, is of Hebrew, that is of Semitic origin. Islam, therefore, in its conception of God as absolute power was true to the Semitic spirit in this respect, at least. And the reaction of Al-Ghazali to the notion of a well-nigh inactive Deity was quite in line with the Semitic genius. Yet Al-Ghazali in surrendering the Peripatetic notion of the Deity as wisdom surrenders a positive element in any adequate conception of the divine life. His conception of the Deity is a dynamic conception it is true; but it is a dynamic conception which has not been fully rationalized. Clearly God ought to act, since an inactive Deity is either a powerless or a jealous Deity. But it is

not clear why the activity of this Deity should be devoid of all wisdom and rationality. Nor is it clear why a God whose power cannot also be wisdom. The error of absolute creative voluntarism, as of absolute creative determinism, rests on a false disjunction, which in both its aspects, is detrimental to the conception of the fullness of the divine life.

It might be urged by the advocates of creative voluntarism, as is tacitly pre-supposed by Al-Ghazali, that the notion of wisdom threatens to introduce a positive limitation on the free movement of the divine will and the divine power and thus impair the divine perfection. Yet there is latent in this contention a positive misconception of the nature of wisdom in its relation to activity. There is limitation whenever an extrinsic principle impedes the progress of an agent or restricts the sphere of its movement. Such a limitation can be described as violent, inasmuch as it violates the laws of the free movement of the agent whose action it does impede. And avowedly this impediment or restriction is derogatory of the notion of free activity, when predicated of God. But there is no limitation when an intrinsic principle presides upon the activity of a free agent, as the law and principle of its natural unfoldment. For activity can be intelligent or rational, without thereby ceasing to be free activity; so that the dilemma of freedom and finalistic rational determinism is a false dilemma. (170) It is, therefore, a grave error to hold that free, rational activity - even when predicated of an absolute Agent - involves any contradiction, as the proponents of absolute

voluntarism allege. There must inhere in the activity of an intelligent, free agent a principle of wisdom or rationality as the interior law of its development, without which activity loses the eminent dignity of rational activity. As such, this principle enters into activity as a constituent element thereof, rather than as an alien,impeding factor which impairs its integrity or reality. And even if a necessity, dictated by the conditions of rationality itself, is found to supervent upon the agent in this process such a necessity would not be the 'bad necessity' of extrinsic compulsion; but is rather the 'happy necessity' which springs from within whenever the object of activity coincides fully with the aspiration of the will directed towards it as its genuine goal and fulfillment. (18)

III

Causality, as an instance of divine love and generosity.

In the course of his exposition of the causal dilemma in chapter 70 of the Summa contra Gentiles (Third Book), Aquinas examines the objections which scepticism might raise against the notion of a dual causality, natural and divine, cooperating in the production of the same effect. The major objection which scepticism might raise is that of the simplicity of the ways of nature which does nothing in vain. "We observe", he writes, "that nature does not employ two instruments where one suffices." (19) But the contention that divine and natural causality converge to produce the same effect amounts, in fact, to this: that two causes

operate simultaneously where a single cause is sufficient; so that one of these causes seems to be superfluous. "Since, then, the divine power suffices to produce natural effects, it is superfluous to employ for the production of the same effects the powers of nature also; or if the forces of nature suffice, it is superfluous for the divine power to work for the same effect." The solution of this dilemma rests on two divergent lines of reasoning. The first of these is the perception of a law of subordination in the hierarchy of causes, whereby the series of inferior causes *itself* depends on the primary cause for its being and operation. The basis of the second is the notion of God's infinite goodness and generosity whereby He communicates to things His likeness "not only in the point of their being, but also in the point of their being causes of other things."⁽²⁰⁾

We are here face-to-face with a principle of far-reaching consequence to the understanding of the causal problem. We have already examined briefly the problem of Being and Act, *in their reciprocal relationship. Being and Act, we argued,* are somehow related one to the other inasmuch as Act is somehow revelatory of the nature of Being. But the discernment of such a revelatory character of Act did not proceed beyond postulating a 'conditional law' of correlation between Act and Being. Unless the Act were to utter Being, we reasoned, Being would remain mysterious and hidden. The consequence is contradicted by the testimony of experience and the actual reality of knowledge; therefore the antecedent must be true and Being must utter itself in Act. This process of reasoning remains, however, hypothetical and indirect, since scepticism challenges the actual reality of

knowledge and consents to bear the burden of this nihilistic repudiation of knowledge by accepting the consequence of the foregoing conditional proposition. Thus the *reductio ad absurdum* of this position which we have attempted remains of no avail, unless the reality of knowledge is conclusively established or a primary metaphysical law presiding on the relationship between Being and Act is discovered. The positive enshrinement of the reality of knowledge can of course be successfully achieved, in the face of nihilistic scepticism. Scepticism cannot escape the reality of knowledge without loading itself with the 'burden of the proof' and thus abandoning its position of arm-chair nihilism. To disprove the reality or possibility of knowledge the sceptic has to erect a whole metaphysical edifice in which this possibility is discounted on grounds inhering in the structure of the real, or in the nature of the relationship between subject and object. But this can be vindicated only on the supposition that the positive knowledge of this structure and this relationship is possible. In this way scepticism slips imperceptibly into the camp of positive metaphysics, playing naively thus into the hands of its own foes.

Now the refutation of scepticism would naturally strengthen the case for causality, since this refutation is bound up with the thesis that knowledge is possible only in causal terms. But causality would remain, in this manner, a purely hypothetical principle whose validity is ascertained inferentially through a process of backward transition from Act to Being, as it were. In order to achieve a categorical vindication of the causal principle

we must reverse this procedure. We must attempt an a priori deduction of causality from the notion of Being. Of course the positivity of knowledge cannot be surrendered for a single moment; inasmuch as the a priori procedure, no less than the a posteriori, presupposes this positivity. But the a priori procedure has the great merit of demonstrating the reality of a concept; ^{in terms of a more primary concept} in this case, of Act in terms of Being, rather than vice versa.

In discussing the problem of the alleged correlation between Act and Being, the question presented itself as a question of relevance. 'What is the justification' we urged, 'of the claim that Act is even relevant to Being?' This question is clearly an epistemological question; or at least, a question which can be satisfactorily answered in epistemological terms, as we have seen in postulating knowledge as the 'middle term' in the relationship between Act and Being. But now we are confronted with a question of a purely metaphysical character, which nevertheless presupposes the former. Even if it is conceded that Being utters itself in Act, one might still ask: 'What is the ground of this self-revelatory utterance on the part of Being, and why should Being utter itself in Act at all?' The epistemological answer to this question is insufficient, because it does not go beyond the perception of an external justification of the self-utterance of Being; a justification, that is to say, which is meaningful from the standpoint of an external observer, hypothetical or real, only. The substance of this answer, as we have seen, is that Being would remain hidden, unless it is revealed in activity. But this hiddenness has regard to the consciousness of a subject into which

the inner structure of Being is reflected in an^dthorough activity. Yet whether Being remains hidden or unhidden does not regard Being itself, independently of a hypothetical knower. The metaphysical question here proposed, therefore, goes beyond the sphere of an external consciousness in which Being finds its reflection, and endeavours to find in the nature of Being itself the ground of a dynamic procession beyond itself.

This dynamic procession of Being is rooted in the inner structure of Being in its affiliation to the Good. The first mode of this procession is the self-revelation of Being in intelligibility by virtue of its inner benevolence. This is what one might call the intrinsic luminosity or radiance of Being, -the luminosity and radiance of Being which is identical with the True.⁽²¹⁾ But this luminosity of Being is only the first mode, in fact the superficial mode, in the process of the self-revelation of Being; since the radiance here described is the radiance of mere representation. The most primordial self-revelation is that of self-communication or self-diffusion. Being communicates not merely its likeness whereby it is externally revealed in intelligibility, but likewise communicates its very substance, overflows with its innermost perfection; the perfection of Being. In this way things are invited, as it were, to share in the plenitude of its life, graciously and benevolently. And herein consists the ultimate mystery of Being as Goodness, that it is communicant of self.

As I have hinted previously, the notion of the self-communication of the Good and of Being, which represents the coping-stone of

the Thomist doctrine of causality and creation, as will become clear in the sequel, is of Neo-Platonic extraction. (22) Its roots can be found in Plato himself. It is well-known how in Platonic ontology the Idea of the Good represents the ultimate source of the intelligibility and the being of all things, as the sun represents the ultimate source of the luminosity and generation of sensible things. (23) This role Plato assigns to the Idea of the Good through a process of ascent from the ephemeral reality of transient things, on to the ontological plenitude of Ideal reality, and finally, on to the super-essential richness of the Good, which is the planetary center around which the galaxy of Ideal Essences revolves. Yet this role is dictated, on the assumptions of Plato, by the immanent laws of this Ideal galaxy in the interrelation of its members severally; rather than in the inner generosity of the Fountainhead from which they well out. Of course the question of absolute genesis as regards these eternal Ideas, is meaningless. But not such is the question of the 'genetic relationship' in which these Ideas stand to their Fountainhead -, with which, it is true, they are co-eternal and co-eval. And when the question of 'genesis' is raised from the standpoint of the unenduring objects of sense, it is found to entail a grave issue which Platonic ontology could not afford to leave unsettled. The Good, on the assumptions of Plato, is the 'Proton ontos', the First in an absolute sense. Whether this 'firstness' is derivative or primary in an epistemological sense; that is, whether the determination of this status of the Good as Absolute Prius is achieved by Plato a priori or a posteriori does not touch the question at issue. Even for Platonic ontology the

problem of a transcendent First Principle is logically and chronologically (or better genetically) posterior to the problem of the given phenomena of concrete existence, the determination of a First Principle of which is dictated by the necessity of rationalizing their being and their reality. In this respect the Platonic doctrine of Reminiscence, set forth in the Phaedo, is not without relevance: the Ideas, as absolute proto-types of particular objects of sense, are revealed in consciousness through the perception of the latter. It is subsequently to this revelation that they are proffered as the principles of explanation thereof.

Once this Firstness of the Good is conceded the question arises: 'Why indeed should the Good, the Primordial and Everlasting Existent bring forth into being this Ideal Galaxy, or even the world of shadowy existence of which this galaxy is the proto-type?' Plato envisages this problem in its entire acuteness in the *Timaeus*. The world of Being admittedly always was and is the same; the world of Becoming is always in a process of becoming and perishing. "Now everything that becomes or is created must of necessity be created by some cause, for nothing can be created without a cause."⁽²⁴⁾ The universe, therefore, must of necessity be created and have a beginning. But when this is posited as a premiss, the previous question recurs in its total concreteness. The creator has avowedly always been, and so have the Patterns upon which his gaze was fixed in fashioning this universe. 'Yet why should the everlasting creator choose to bring this universe of transient things out of the darkness of eternal nothingness at all?

And why should he impart to it the perfection of Being, Form and Intelligibility which pertain to him, in the first place, alone??'- Because, Plato retorts, the Creator was good, "and no goodness can ever have any jealousy of anything. And being free from jealousy he desired that all things should be as like himself as possible;"⁽²⁵⁾

Here we have the ultimate clue to the mystery of creation. Creation is the manifestation of the boundless generosity and benevolence of the Demiurge, in whom there is no jealousy or niggardliness; and as such is a movement of free and outgoing love.⁽²⁶⁾

The notion of the good, as the ultimate ground of the emanation of things from their primordial fountainhead, was enshrined in Neo-Platonic metaphysics, following the example of the master, as an elemental postulate. According to Plotinus the One is the superabundant store of all perfections, from which all things take their origin; the supreme reality which transcends Being, consciousness, activity and life while giving rise to all these things; the goal unto which all things yearn, while it desires nothing and yearns unto nothing. "All things act with a view to the Good, or on account of the Good, but the Good has no need of anything."

The Intellect, the First-born of the One, turns to the One by virtue of the being and form it has received from it; but the One itself desires not for there is nothing towards which it could turn.

"The Good has imparted to the Intellect... an image of itself, that is why there is a desire in the intellect... But the Good desires not, for what could it desire? And it acquires nothing, for there is nothing for it to seek. It is therefore not the Intellect, because in the Intellect there is desire and yearning for its own form." (27)

And yet notwithstanding the superabundance of its riches and its brimfull satiety it has generated all things. Like a stream without a source, it pours forth its waters unto all the rivers; but its waters are not thereby exhausted. Like the life which circulates in the veins of the tree without being spent away and which animates all parts of the tree while it abides motionless in the roots, it gives life to all things while remaining distinct from all things and stirs in all things while remaining motionless and indiscernible. (28)

The teaching of Plotinus was transmitted to the west through the 'Liber de Causis' of Proclus, and Arabic recension of Proclus' 'Elementatio Theologica'. (29) The doctrine of the self-diffusion of the Good is stated in an eloquent way by Proclus. "Everything perfect", he writes, (30) proceeds to the generation of those things which it is able to produce, imitating the one principle of all. For as that on account of its own goodness, unically gives subsistence to all beings (for the good and the one are the same, so that the boniform is the same with the unical) thus also those things

which are posterior to the first, on account of their perfection, hasten to generate beings inferior to their own essence. For perfection is a certain portion of the Good, and the perfect, so far as it is perfect, imitates the Good."

Aquinas, who wrote a commentary on the Liber de Causis in (31) 1268, was fully familiar with the thought of Proclus. Yet it was primarily through the Divine Names of Dionysius the Areopagite that the doctrine of the self-diffusive character of the Good found its way to the Thomist system, as evidenced by the innumerable references of Aquinas to that work whenever the problem recurs in his works. In addition to the Liber de Causis, the Divine Names and the Mystical Theology - transmitted to the Latin West in the 9th century by Erigena, represent the main indirect channel through which Neo-Platonism reached the 13th century (32) Scholastics and notably Aquinas.

We cannot dwell at length on the Neo-Platonic mysticism of (33) the Pseudo-Dionysius, the great Neo-Platonist of the 5th century.

We must, however, stop to examine his doctrine of the self diffusion of the Good, as set forth in the fourth chapter of the Divine Names, which exercised such a decisive influence on the theology of Aquinas. The debt of Aquinas to the Pseudo-Dionysius is incalculable. With Aristotle and Augustine, Dionysius represents the main spring from which the Thomist system takes its source. The Thomist doctrine of the 'Via negativa' and the analogical (34) predicability of positive attributes to the Creator and the creature; (35) the Thomist doctrine of evil and the exclusive dynamism of the good;

the notion of the good as essentially self-communicative; the Thomist angelology; ⁽³⁶⁾ the Thomist conception of causality as an instance of divine generosity; and finally the Thomist doctrine of love ⁽³⁷⁾ - are all of direct Dionysian inspiration. Aquinas, it is true, recasts in precise technical language, the intuitions of the Great Mystic, enunciated in symbolic mystical language.

The name 'Good' which scripture attributes to God, explains Dionysius, must be interpreted in a manner which sets the transcendent Goodness of the Divine Being apart from the goodness of all created things. For this Goodness is the source and fountain-head of all being and good. "As our sun through no choice or deliberation, but by the very fact of its existence gives light to all those things which have any inherent power of sharing its illumination, even so the Good (which is above the sun, as the transcendent archetype by the very mode of its existence is above its faded image) sends forth upon all things according to their receptive powers, the rays of Its undivided Goodness." ⁽³⁸⁾ Hence the spiritual Beings (sc. the Angels) receive their being and blessedness and "pass on to those that are below them of the gifts which have come unto them from the Good" ⁽³⁹⁾ - uttering in this way the Divine Silence. And hence rational beings derive their being and their intelligence, plants their life and lifeless things the quality of bare existence. In the Good are they all brought forth into Being and in the Good are they preserved. The Good is thus the Fount of all things, the source of their being and reality. And it is likewise the source of their preservation, of their beauty and order, ⁽⁴⁰⁾ and even of their causality whereby they

impart their being to other things.⁽⁴¹⁾ In this capacity the Good can be described as the Efficient Cause of all things. Yet the Good is likewise the Beautiful unto which all things aspire, and as such is the Final Cause of all things. From it do they derive their harmony, cohesion and unity.⁽⁴²⁾ All dynamism, all motion or rest, all being and order are grounded in the Good and Beautiful, as their Efficient, Formal and Final Cause, "which is above all rest and motion; through which all rest and motion come, and from which and in which and unto which and for the sake of which they are... Yea, all that exists and comes into being exists and comes into being because of the Beautiful and the Good; and unto this object all things gaze and by it are moved and conserved, and for the sake of it, because of it and in it existeth every originating principle - be this 'exemplar' or be it final or efficient or formal or material cause - in a word, all beginning, all conservation and all ending, or (to sum it up) all things that have being are derived from the Beautiful and the Good."⁽⁴³⁾

The sphere of the Good, therefore, embraces all Being, so that "all creatures in so far as they have being are good and come from the Good;"⁽⁴⁴⁾ and have Being in proportion as they participate in the Good.⁽⁴⁵⁾ Outside this sphere, there is only darkness, evil, not-Being. If the Good is the Fount of all being, then evil can generate neither being nor not-being; that is can be neither its own Source or the source of its opposite. Unlike the Good which is pregnant with the infinite virtualities of its overflowing generosity, evil is barren, niggardly and impotent. All dynamism, all energy and all causality flow from the Good. Evil, qua evil,

"causes no existence but only debases and corrupts, so far as its power extends, the substance of things that have being." And even this power for destruction and debasement it derives not from itself, but from the Good. "Qua evil, it neither hath being nor confers it; through the action of the Good, it hath being (Yea, a good being) and confers being on good things. Or rather... evil in itself hath neither being, goodness, productiveness, nor power of creating things which have being and goodness."⁽⁴⁶⁾

In the exact technical language of Aquinas, this profound insight of the Pseudo-Dionysius into the nature of the Good and of Being is stated in terms of convertibility. The Good and Being are convertible notions: things are in so far as they are good and are good in so far as they possess being.⁽⁴⁷⁾ Now if we were to enquire: 'what is it that constitutes the being of an existing thing, in the Aristotelian scheme', the retort would be Act or Form; since Act represents in things the principle of their perfection.⁽⁴⁸⁾ But act, in the Aristotelian-Thomist scheme, is not only the principle of Being, it is likewise the principle of activity in existing things; the activity which flows from the superabundant perfection of Being. This is the genesis of the Aristotelian-Thomist dictum⁽⁴⁹⁾ that things 'act inasmuch as they are in being', - which corresponds in the Dionysian scheme, to the dictum 'things are and act inasmuch as they are good', as explained above.

The dynamic character of Being is thus rooted in the very essence of Being as self-communicative or self-diffusive. Whether this self-diffusiveness is explained in Platonic terms, as in the

case of Dionysius and his predilection for the concept 'Good'; or in Aristotelian terms, as in the case of Aquinas and his predilection for the concept 'act', - is immaterial to the major question at issue. Aquinas, in any case, achieves a reconciliation of the two concepts which, on the surface of it, leaves no serious dialectical remainder. Being, Good and Act are equivalent and convertible terms. If the Good is represented in Platonic and Neo-Platonic speculation as the store of all perfections with which it overflows, owing to its superabundance, and thus confers beauty, being and energy upon things; this role can be ascribed, in the Aristotelian scheme, to the Act which represents the principle of Being and perfection in things. Yet even a superficial reading of Platonic and Aristotelian ontology would reveal the conflicting motives of the two great sages in ascribing this role to two concepts generically distinct. What corresponds to the Act or Form in Platonic ontology is the Idea. But whereas the Act (or Form) is taken by Aristotle as an ultimate principle and loaded with the absolute character of transcendence in the form of Pure Act, the Idea is transcended in Platonism in the direction of a superior reality which is the ultimate ground and principle thereof. And this is the role ascribed to the Good in its relation to the Idea in Plato. The Good is indubitably a principle transcending the Ideas, as their source and fountainhead. If the Idea is being, intelligibility, perfection (as indeed is the Act or Form in Aristotle), then the Good is super-being, super-intelligibility, super-perfection. (50) This generic status of the Good, as transcending being and intelligibility, is the great theme of later

Neo-Platonism, whereby it positively departs from the genuine Aristotelianism of the Stagirite.

The metaphysics of the Act, although it can be reconciled with the metaphysics of the Good, cannot be said to coincide with it completely. Thus Aquinas, even when he declares that being, act and good are convertible notions, is nevertheless committed to an ontology which ascribes priority to being qua act, rather than to being qua good; and therefore, ascribes a purely axiological or finalistic role to the good in its relation to being. ⁽⁵¹⁾ In this his faithfulness to Aristotle is demonstrated with striking vividness. The remarkable aspect of the matter is that he endorses so readily the Dionysian concept of the Good as self-diffusive abundance that one might rightfully wonder how far the discrepancy of the Good and the Act in metaphysical status, was perceived by him. For the Good, in the Dionysian ontology, is an ontological First Principle, the Efficient Cause, as well as the Final Cause of all things - ⁽⁵²⁾, rather than a purely axiological or finalistic principle.

What gives gravity to this accusation is that the Act is enshrined as First Principle in the Dualist metaphysics of Aristotle as a counter-part to potency, which is set up as a parallel First Principle and co-eternal with it. Here the chasm which separates the Aristotelian concept of the Act from the Neo-Platonic concept of the Good is displayed to sight. The Neo-Platonic metaphysics is a metaphysic of oneness, wherein the genesis of things is described, as it must needs be described in such a metaphysics,-

in terms of emanation from the unique principle of all Being, which transcends Being. But not such is the Aristotelian, Dualist metaphysics, in which the Pure Act represents the Final Goal, the object of desire unto which things yearn, rather than the Fount of Being. For it is an Emanationist account of the genesis of things - if such an account is thinkable from the standpoint of Aristotelianism at all -, can only be achieved at the cost of the most cardinal distinction in Aristotelianism, the distinction between Act and Potency; and consequently at the risk of surrendering the most decisive tenet of Aristotelian metaphysics. (53)

It should not be suspected here that our critique of the Thomist equation of Being qua Good and Being qua Act is inspired by any desire to surrender a positive gain which the Thomist synthesis of the Neo-Platonic and Aristotelian elements of the problem achieves. For such would amount to a falling back on the irreducible dualism of Aristotle, with all the insoluble difficulties it raises; (54) and it is to the credit of Aquinas that his metaphysical vision on this, as on many a decisive issue, reaches beyond the limits of Aristotelianism. What we are endeavouring to show is that the unqualified identification of the Neo-Platonic concept of the Good and the Aristotelian concept of the Act betrays a failure to see into the depths of the problem and threatens to confuse the two distinct concepts. And this, as I have hinted previously, is one decisive issue over which Arabian Neo-Platonic Peripatetism was courting the cause of error. (55)

Whatever our verdict on the Thomist equation of Being qua Act and Being qua Good, it must be conceded that, although the two concepts are of heterogeneous extraction, Aquinas utilizes them for his metaphysical and theological purposes with outstanding mastery. The first perfection of things is the perfection of being which things derive from the First Being, who is unto all things the cause of Being. (56) This perfection is even prior to the Good, since being is predicable of all things in Act, whereas good is predicable of things which participate in a certain grade of positive perfection only. (57) Both objectively and subjectively (secundum rem and secundum rationem) being is prior to the good: in the first case, because being is predicated of a thing, inasmuch as it is in act simpliciter; in the second, because being is what is first conceived by the intellect and what is designated by the name. (58)

God confers upon things the perfection of being, by reason of His superabundant generosity and goodness. As Efficient Cause, He bestows upon them His likeness by conferring upon them the title of existence; as Final Cause, He implants in them the desire to seek Him as their ultimate end and goal. (59) In this way, He is the Principle and Term of all things, their beginning and end. The paradox of the divine goodness and generosity is that God, notwithstanding His satiety and His self-sufficiency, has pleased to bring forth into being the whole creation freely and benevolently. For what other reason can be adduced for this movement of free love, save the divine munificence and liberality? Creation avowedly adds nothing to God whose essence exhausts all positive perfection.

The 'ultima ratio' of the exteriorization of the divine will cannot, therefore, be said to consist in God's desire for the creature, as it were; but rather in the self-centered movement of dynamic and outgoing love which wells out, of the bosom of the Deity, not out of penury or desire but rather out of satiety and superabundance. (60)

Yet the divine generosity does not manifest itself merely in the perfection of Being. If things were endowed with being purely and simply they would be endowed indeed with a perfection which is proper to God Himself and thereby the divine generosity would be amply demonstrated. The infinity of God's generosity, however, is such that in addition to the perfection of being, He has conferred upon the creature the power to generate being, the energy whereby it can communicate its own perfection to other things. And in this is rooted ultimately the causality of things and their dynamic energy, whereby they share in the divine essence. "Things tend to be like God, forasmuch as He is good.... Now it is out of His goodness that God bestows being on others; for all things act forasmuch as they are actually perfect. Therefore all things seek to be like God, by being causes of others." (61)

A metaphysic of inert being, like the metaphysics of the Loquentes, which strips created things of the predicates of dynamism and causal energy, represents thus a positive detraction of the perfection of its Author. It is, as we have seen, proper to being to communicate its perfection to other things. In bestowing being upon things, God can withhold from them what is proper to being only through jealousy or niggardliness. But this is incompatible

with the notion of the boundless perfection and generosity of God;
so that the causality of things must be conceded in the interest of
divine perfection and sovereignty. (62)

* * * * *

The foregoing account of the self-diffusive character of being is a purely Neo-Platonic account. 'How does Aquinas fit it into his Aristotelian, metaphysical scheme' must now be examined. The Act, in Aristotelian ontology, as we have already seen, is merely one constituent element of the real; whether the real is taken in its individuality, as manifested in substance; or in its totality, as manifested in the universe as a whole -, potency being the other element. Even in its capacity as Pure Act, the act plays only the finalistic role of the Immoveable Mover unto which all things gravitate. Strictly speaking, therefore, the Act cannot be said to be 'cause' in the precise sense. For Aristotle the Being of things is an irreducible, initial datum of which he offers no account. That is why he relaxes so complacently in the doctrine of the eternity of the world. The 'genesis of Being', according to him, calls for no account, because, in an absolute sense, there is no genesis of Being. What calls for a metaphysical account is Becoming: that is, the self-contained, circular movement of Being upon itself endlessly and everlastingly. And here the distinction between Act and Potency is more than sufficient to account for this circular movement and meet the Eleatic dilemma of the abiding identity of Being. (63)

In the Thomist scheme, however, such a conception of the problem is inadequate and incomplete to say the least. If the Becoming of things calls for a satisfactory metaphysical account, much more does their Being or Genesis call for such an account. And for this to be achieved we cannot content ourselves with an account of the transition of things from potential to actual being, as in the Aristotelian doctrine of Becoming. We must proceed beyond this and break through the circle of the self-contained endless movement of Being, and thus settle the problem of the initial eruption of Being into the sphere of actuality. Such an eruption, when its reality is fully scrutinized, is found to differ from becoming in precisely this respect: that it is neither transmutation nor change, since change implies a process from one term to another, and we are clearly confronted here with the problem of the initial genesis of Being.⁽⁶⁴⁾ Consequently philosophy must reckon with a metaphysical problem which is even prior to the problem of Becoming. In metaphysical language, this problem can be designated as the 'problem of the genesis of Being'; in religious language, as the 'problem of Creation'.

Now note here in what position Thomism stands to Aristotelianism over the problem of Being and Becoming. The Act-Potency metaphysics, formulated by Aristotle, is conceived with a view to solving the problem of Becoming, and in this its success can hardly be gainsayed; especially when it is recalled how difficult the prospect of such success was made by Parmenides and the Eleatics. For the strict requirements of this metaphysics of Becoming, the notion of Act as 'entelechy' and, in the last

analysis, of the Pure Act, as ultimate Entelechy or ultimate Teleology, proved more than satisfactory. Becoming, change, activity are interpreted, in the Act-Potency metaphysics of the Stagirite, as the transition of a real entity from a phase of incomplete perfection to a phase of complete perfection. And in this process, the Act plays ideally the role of Final Cause; and effectively the role of Formal Cause.⁽⁶⁵⁾ But nowhere does Aristotle ascribe to this Act the role of efficient cause; the cause, that is to say, which confers being upon the entity in question. Such a prospect is precluded by Aristotle's very conception of motion, especially, in relation to the whole universe which is, on Aristotle's showing, in a process of endless development.⁽⁶⁶⁾ It is curious to note that neither for Aristotle nor for Greek consciousness in general does this problem present itself at all. The problem of creation for Greek consciousness was dismissed by Parmenides as an irrational problem, when he declared at the opening of his poem on Truth that 'Being is, not-Being is not.' The assertion that Being could come out of not-Being involved thus a violation of the law of contradiction.

Aquinas, notwithstanding his integral acceptance of the Aristotelian metaphysics of the Act, professes a doctrine of creation in which this very notion of Act is central. One might wonder how on earth this notion, born in such unpropitious circumstances, could be employed in the vindication of a thesis repudiated so emphatically by the great representative of the Greek genius. Might it not be that Aquinas, then, succeeds in

accommodating this concept of Act to the requirements of his metaphysics of creation only through a process of fraud? For how can a concept contrived to meet the requirements of a metaphysics of Becoming be transplanted integrally into a higher order and employed in the settlement of a more acute problem, the problem of the genesis of Being?

Here the whole weight of our foregoing accusation against Aquinas is brought out. Yet it ought to be remarked in all fairness that Aquinas succeeds in accommodating the Aristotelian notion of Act for his metaphysical and theological needs through a process of modification rather than fraud. And the justifiability of his procedure rests upon one major circumstance: the fact that Aristotle had left the way open for such an eventuality, perhaps inadvertently, through his notion of the Act, as 'Energy', no less than 'Entelechy'.⁽⁶⁷⁾ Even for the purposes of his own metaphysics a notion of Act devoid of dynamism, like the notions of Idea and Being in Plato and Parmenides respectively, would have proved inadequate. This was one of the major scores, it will be recalled,⁽⁶⁸⁾ on which Aristotle rejects the Platonic doctrine of Ideas.

If the becoming of things is to be satisfactorily accounted for, an 'energising principle' must be introduced in which the dynamism of cosmic life could be rooted. And the Act can be made to play such a role, even though for the purposes of Aristotle such a role is not altogether indispensable; inasmuch as the dynamism latent in things is rooted in the aspiration of Matter (on account of its penury: *στέρησις*) for the fullness of the Pure Act, which

represents the 'Final Cause' towards which all cosmic movement and becoming gravitate.

But to achieve this, as we have hinted previously, the Aristotelian concept of Act must somehow be recast in Neo-Platonic terms. Aquinas, therefore, succeeds in conceiving of the Act as communicative or diffusive of itself by viewing it through the prism of the Dionysian concept of the Good. In this way he succeeds in corroborating the validity of the equation Being-qua-Act with Being-qua-Good. The procedure of Aquinas in this corroboration need not arouse any surprise. The God of the Pseudo-Dionysius is absolute Goodness, the God of Aristotle is Pure Act. But clearly it is the same God who is here envisaged from two different metaphysical standpoints. In any case, this is precisely the point of the claim, which can be successfully defended, that Aquinas achieves a positive synthesis of Aristotelian with Christian metaphysical and theological presuppositions -, a synthesis in which Neo-Platonism indeed finds as prominent a place, we believe, as Aristotelianism where the conception of the divine nature and of divine activity and creation is concerned. God, whose first attribute is Being according to both Aquinas and Dionysius, (69) plays the role of 'middle term' in this process of synthesising the two heterogeneous notions of Act and Good.

Now if in God the predicates Act, Being, Good are submerged in the unity of the divine essence, then God's activity cannot be dissociated from the notion of God's Being or set up as a quality of the divine Being effectively distinct from the divine Essence. Rationally, of course, we can distinguish in God between Being

and Operation; but only rationally , since otherwise we threaten
(70)
to impair the unity and simplicity of the divine Being.

Owing to the fullness of His Being and the superabundance of His Goodness, God unfolds His Essence in the twofold movement of procession and creation, while remaining fully within Himself, as it were. This is how Aquinas describes the procession of the divine persons from God in De Potentia. Since it is of the nature of what is in act, he argues, to communicate itself as far as possible; it follows that God who is the fullness of Act (maxime et purissime actus) communicates His Being in the divine persons;
(71)
as indeed in creation too. In the Contra Gentiles, creation is described in the same terms of self-communicative actuality.

Inasmuch as every agent acts according as it is in act, and inasmuch as it inheres, in the nature of the perfect to communicate
(72)
its likeness to other things, he argues, God creates things by communicating to them of the fullness of His perfection which is
(73)
Being.

At this point a problem presents itself not unnaturally to our consciousness. The account of activity in terms of self-communicative actuality might be legitimate in the case of God, because in Him the Act of Being is identical with the Act of Being-Good; and the self-communicative character of the Good is not here in question. In the creature, whose being is not identical with
(74)
his goodness, on the assumptions of Aquinas, such an account would seem totally unwarranted; and our analysis of causality would gain nothing from the conception of the self-diffusive character of the Good in which we endeavoured to find the ultimate roots

of causality. In order to resolve this difficulty we have only to widen our conception of the Act in its relation to the Good; and thus load it with the character of an a priori principle. Even in the unique case of God, the legitimacy of the argument from the self-communicative character of the Good as A ct, derives from the circumstance that, activity is rooted in the Good as such, and is commensurate with it. It is true that in God, these two terms coincide, because in Him they attain the degree of superlative perfection. But clearly even in God, the legitimacy of this contention would be unwarranted, unless the equation of Goodness and Act were an a priori postulate. The self-communication of Act is not predicable of God, because He is God. It is rather because Act, qua Act, is self-communicative of its essence by virtue of its affiliation to the Good, that God can be said to act, because He is good. So that wherever a measure of actuality, however minimal, is found in an entity, action can be seen to emanate from this entity by virtue of its intrinsic goodness. The only special position that God occupies in this relationship of actuality to operation is that of eminence. Because He is Act, complete and entire, God can act in an absolute sense and confer upon things the absolute predicate of Being - a role which no particular
(75)
created agent can perform. But created agents can act in proportionately in the exact measure of actuality proper to them, and it is in this precise respect that they differ from God.

It is only in this way that the reality of causality, as a predicate of the Creator and the creature, can be saved. Causality is not predicable of God arbitrarily, as it were; that is, by

reason of His sheer divinity and sovereignty. For if so, then the predicability of causality to the creature would be unwarranted and the pretensions of scepticism would be justifiable after all. But the dramatic, metaphysical predicament in which scepticism - as we have seen in the case of Al-Ghazali and the Ash'arites, - is caught up is that its procedure in predicating causality of the Creator Himself is found, upon close scrutiny, to be wholly unjustifiable. How, indeed, can we speak of a causal relationship between God and the universe (as, in fact is implied in speaking of God as First Cause of the universe) when the causal principle itself is without validity? Or, perhaps, the relationship of authorship in which God stands to the universe is not, strictly speaking, a causal relationship; since God as the author of the very being of things, stands to the universe in an absolutely unique and incommunicable relationship. Yet, this thesis, rather than invalidate the predicability of causality to the Author of Being, raises a most decisive issue which must now be examined: 'In what precise relationship does causality stand to Being, absolute or relative, essential or accidental?' 'And what is the precise character of this relationship itself: Is it a univocal, homogeneous character; or is it one which must be characterised in other terms, enjoined by the precise character of Being with which the meaning of causality is said to be bound up?'

We will postpone the settlement of these two questions for the time being. What we have gained by raising them at this point is a vivid awareness of the inescapability of conceiving causality in the perspective of Being. The significance of this discernment

for the Thomist epistemology and metaphysics becomes evident the moment it is recalled that the legitimacy of the empirical procedure of Aquinas in demonstrating the existence of God and determining His attributes is bound up with the admission of a causal relationship between God and the universe, grounded in the very nature of Being. It is because our analysis of Being, as empirically given, reveals the existence of certain universal determinations pertaining to Being, as such, that we are able to rise from the finite to the infinite and load it with certain positive contents, without exposing ourselves to the charge of groundless constructions. Only in ^{an}'arbitrary' ontology can causality be attributed to God and denied to the creature, merely on the strength of God's 'arbitrary' uniqueness and sovereignty.

IV

The role of Causality in the Ladder of Analogical Ascent from the Finite to the Infinite.

We have remarked in discussing Aristotelian dualism and the difficulties it raises for any positive doctrine of creation, that the latter is possible only in monistic terms. Now whatever our procedure in determining the existence of a First Principle from which things can be said to originate, this First Principle must evidently be the chronological and logical ('Prior' in a process which is described as Creation. A monistic ontology, like that of Plotinus and Al-Ghazali, sets out inevitably from this 'First Principle', as the source from which all things emanate, regardless of the exact mode ascribed to this emanation. Once this emanation

is posited as an initial assumption a series of metaphysical problems are forthwith raised with which such an ontology is bound to reckon. 'What', one might ask, 'does this emanation entail as regards the creature?' The creature emanates, admittedly, from the One, by reason of its infinite plenitude and generosity. 'But what does this creature derive from the One out of which it issued forth; and what is the exact scope of this generosity as regards the being of the creature?' This question refers clearly to the status of the creature considered in itself; subsequently to the act of its constitution in being. In settling it monism might give one of two answers, depending in fact, on its conception of the mode of emanation of the creature from the One; and, in the last analysis, on its conception of the exact nature of the One itself. The first of these answers, as in Plotinus and Dionysius, can be stated in the following terms: Owing to its infinite generosity, the One overflows with a measure of all its perfections which it confers upon the creature. Its goodness is bestowed integrally upon the creature, as regards its substance if not its degree. The second answer, as in Al-Ghazali and the Ash'arites, concedes the reality of this emanation of the divine goodness; without conceding its integral character. In its emphatic stress on the transcendence of the One it declares that the 'integral quality' of this perfection cannot be shared by the creature at all. Thus, it creates a chasm between the creator and the creature which no dialectic can bridge.

We have already seen in what way this position detracts of the divine perfection, while it professes to exalt the divine

transcendence and sovereignty. But the speciousness of this position consists in the fact that it rests upon two further grievous metaphysical errors: a false conception of divine transcendence and a false conception of the nature of Being. The wages of the former error is the impossibility of ascent from the creature to the creator; the wages of the latter is the unjustifiability of predicating causality of the creator and the creature.

Dionysius described the Good as self-diffusive generosity, as ~~over~~-flowing abundance. In this Good is rooted the emanation of things from the bosom of God. Yet the emanation of things from God is not only a self-communication of the divine goodness; it is likewise a self-revelation of the divine essence, an utterance of the Divine Silence, in the words of Dionysius. (76) The Godhead, in the super-essential unity of His ineffable Being, is nameless, unknowable and unattainable. Were He to remain concealed behind the veils of His undifferentiated identity, He would remain totally inscrutable and ineffable. But owing to His boundless goodness and generosity the Divine Being issues forth out of the solitude of His undifferentiated Godhead, first, into the differentiated trinity of divine persons and, second, into the multiplicity of created things. (77)

Here again we witness the significance of the Dionysian concept of Being, both as overflowing abundance and as radiant luminosity. And this is the character of all Being, finite or infinite, relative or absolute. Finite, relative Being, it is true, is self-revelatory of essence and self-diffusive of substance, in a derivative and limited sense; inasmuch as it derives this two-

fold character from the First Being, with and through the Act in which it derives its very Being. But even when the derivative character of this twofold quality of finite Being is conceded, it remains that it is by reason of its Being that a thing is capable of communicating its perfection/ to other things, however fragmentary and partial this perfection is. Thus even for Dionysius and Neo-Platonism, in general, self-communicative goodness is a predicate of Being as such. It is indisputable that, in one sense, the ultimate ground of this self-communicative goodness is the participation of all things in the Goodness of the One; so that it is truly the One itself which is revealed and communicated in every created thing. The pantheistic predicament, however, is not - as would seem from this admission- totally inescapable. Outside the One in whose fullness all things participate there is admittedly nothing. Things come to be through participation in its inexhaustible Being, without appropriating it, like the radii of the circle which share the same center without appropriating it or becoming identical with it. (78) Contrary to the assumptions of Pantheism, however, the One can be diversified in the many while remaining distinct from them in essence; its perfection can be shared by the many through a process of participation rather than through a process of dis-integration, as it were. The One proliferates its Being without being broken up or pulverised in the multiplicity of things it brings forth. And this is precisely the nature of the relationship 'creation' in which the One generates all things.

Now in determining the character of finite Being, Neo-Platonism-, setting out from the First Principle of things as it must, proceeds to ascribe to finite Being the same positive characteristics latent in its conception of this First Principle; while reserving at the same time to this First Principle the character of transcendence proper to it. We shall describe this as the (process of descent' in the determination of the character of finite from infinite Being. But for Thomism and Aristotelianism, this procedure is unjustifiable; since the characteristics of infinite Being, considering the actual structure of our consciousness, can be determined only through a 'process of ascent' from the finite to the infinite. We arrive at demonstrating the existence of God and at determining His sovereign attributes, Aquinas teaches, from the signs of visible things. (79) The existence of God cannot be demonstrated a priori; because we can have no a priori conception of the divine Essence, which would serve as middle term in this demonstration, on account of the infinite disproportionateness of (80) this Essence with our created intellect. Nor can any 'intelligible species', which our intellect abstracts from the conditions of sensibility, correspond with the infinity of the divine essence. If the a priori procedure were the only procedure then the demonstration of God's existence would be a vain endeavour. But in addition to this procedure, there is the procedure from 'effect' to 'cause', or the method generally known as the a (81) posteriori method of demonstration. If the effect is completely

adequate to the cause - and reveals as it were all its power and perfection, then this method can yield us with incalculable gain with respect to the nature of the cause of which it is the effect. If, on the other hand, this effect falls short of the cause in being or eminence, then we can scarcely expect to derive from it an adequate notion of the character of the cause. God, as cause, stands to created effects, as the infinite to the finite. Therefore, no effect can be adequate to the revelation of His essence. The a posteriori method proves at best, with respect to God, that He is (an sit) never what He is (quid est). Demonstratively, (81) the latter question admits of a solution only in negative terms.

Yet the legitimacy of the a posteriori method cannot be admitted without qualification. The validity of the causal argument presupposes the validity of the causal principle, as a principle of Being qua Being. Otherwise the transition from the finite to the infinite would be altogether unwarranted. In the Aristotelian scheme, as we have already seen, causality is said to be a concomitant of actuality, in real entities; in the Dionysian scheme, instead, it is said to be a concomitant of goodness. We have expounded at sufficient length the implications of the Dionysian position. We must now turn to causality in its relationship to the Act in the Metaphysics of the Stagirite and Aquinas. The analysis of Being, as given in the order of concrete existence, reveals that the principle through which things 'are what they are' is the Form or Act. (82) It would follow that the Being of an entity is commensurate with its actuality. For avowedly things are not, even in the point of being, of the same

rank as it were, and that precisely on account of the diversity of their participation in the fullness of the Act. The ultimate reason of this diversity, as we shall see later, is the incommensurability of any 'even' or uniform order of created being with the divine goodness as manifested in the diverse multiplicity of things. But whatever the metaphysical justification of this diversity, and the hierarchization of things consequent upon it, a 'law of ontological gradation' can be discovered in the order of Being, running concurrently with the order of gradation pertaining to Act. And in this parallel gradation of Being and Act we have a decisive clue to the existence of God as the Pure Act, in whom there is no composition;⁽⁸³⁾ or the First Being, from whom all created things derive their being. The principle, invoked in the two Summas in the justification of this procedure, is the abstract maxim that whatever is pre-eminent in a genus is the cause of all the members participating in that genus: 'Quod autem dicitur maxime tale in aliquo genere, est causa omnium quae sunt illius generis, sicut ignis, qui est causa omnium calidorum.'⁽⁸⁴⁾ Thus as the grades of nobility, goodness and truth are referable to a Pre-eminent Term in their genus, so are the grades of being referable to the First Being in whom the perfections of all things are rooted.⁽⁸⁵⁾

But the Act, as we have seen, does not represent merely the principle through which things are what they are; it represents equally the principle whereby things act; the principle of their dynamism and efficacy, by reason, it is true, of the fullness of

being which the Act confers upon them, as it were. If it is a fundamental dictum of Aristotelianism and Thomism, as we have seen, that things are inasmuch as they are in act, it is no less a fundamental dictum that things act inasmuch as they are in act. Things 'are' and 'act', therefore, by virtue of the same Act which confers upon them the title of being and activity. The indissoluble unity of Being and operation, ~~ind~~ Aquinas, is such that he calls the former the 'first act', the latter the 'second act' in a real entity.⁽⁸⁶⁾ But clearly the distinction between the first and second act, 'the integrity' and operation of the object - is of a rational order. It does not and ought not to affect the unity of the indivisible Act in which the object is constituted in being. The unity of being is a metaphysical postulate which is indispensable for the adequate conception of Being, even when it is considered in the concrete in its reference to a real entity in its identical self hood and its distinction from other real entities. A thing clings jealously to its unity and integrity as it clings to its being.⁽⁸⁷⁾

We are here face-to-face with the old Eleatic dilemma. The identity of being is somehow inescapable; but this identity should not be conceived in such a way as to infringe the no less inescapable notion of the diversity of being. In order to avoid the Eleatic impasse, we must have recourse, in the first place, to the Platonic doctrine of participation upon which we have touched. This doctrine finds the genetic ground of finite being in the infinite. Clearly then the finite and infinite, although they somehow participate in the same category of being, are distinct

and irreducible into each other. The exact ontological status with which the finite is invested in Platonism needs not detain us here. For however minimal the shadowy existence ascribed by Plato to the particular things of sense, these things participate in a positive way in the perfection of the infinite. The import of this initial distinction between the finite and the infinite to our argument is decisive. In the very admission of the distinction between the finite and the infinite, Platonism posits both a law of dependence, as between the finite and the infinite, and a law of hierarchy, as between the members participating in the perfection of the infinite. The finite and the infinite are clearly not equal in the degree of being or perfection; nor for that matter the finite participants in the perfection of the infinite. Participation implies diversity in the grades of participated perfection, without which the very distinction between the finite and the infinite would not arise at all.

Now it is, of course, a serious problem how Being can be taken as a 'common term' in the determination of the relationship of hierarchy in which the diverse members of the ontological series stand to each other; and in the last analysis, the relationship in which the finite stands to the infinite. It is no less a serious problem how the concept Being can as much as be predicated of two terms between which there is no proportion: as the finite and the infinite. Yet these two problems are found to resolve themselves, upon close scrutiny, into one major metaphysical problem: namely, 'How can Being be shared by the many and at the

same time remain whole and entire'; or in simple terms: 'How can we speak of Being as one and many without violating the law of contradiction?'

To resolve this problem we have only to recall the Dionysian doctrine of the self-diffusiveness of the Being identical with the Good. The Good communicates its perfections to created things, without thereby being exhausted or spent away; and without thereby alienating itself, as it were, and losing its identity and transcendence. It is in its insistence on the irreducible transcendence of the One that the Monism of the Pseudo-Dionysius is able to circumlocute the impasse of monistic Pantheism without falling into it. For the Good is not diversified through morcellation, but rather through duplication: it is not the 'substance' of the First Being which is shared by created things but rather Its 'likeness'. Thus the First Being brings forth the manifold diversity of things without being commingled with its workmanship. Owing to the inadequacy of any created being to represent the inexhaustible fullness of the Divine Being, things are multiplied in accordance with a gradational scale of perfection; and this is the ultimate principle of the distinction and multiplicity of things. (88) The one becomes many - to restate the matter in terms of the time-hallowed dilemma of the Eleatics, by reason of its self-diffusive character. But in this self-diffusion, being is not manifested, as it were, in one dimension, owing to its infinite perfection and its incommensurability with any of its finite manifestations. And in this same incommensurability, as we shall see in the last section of this

chapter, is grounded the rational possibility of the extraordinary and miraculous intervention of God in history.

This account of the unity-in-diversity of Being can be invoked now in the justification of the predicability of the concept Being of both the finite and the infinite. It is, of course, baffling that the notion Being should be taken as a 'common term', as between two entities incommensurably disproportionate with one another. The Neo-Platonic conception of the One as a super-Ontal reality seems, therefore, fully legitimate on this very score. Yet Neo-Platonism itself, notwithstanding the transcendence it ascribes to the One, employs the concept Being as a 'common term', in speaking of its relationship to things. For does it not speak of the One as a super-Being, or the Fount of Being which itself transcends Being? Now however much Neo-Platonism might urge that this inadequate approach to the matter is dictated by the actual structure of our consciousness which can lay hold of ontological concepts only; and however much it might insist on the rational inaccessibility of the Infinite, it is nevertheless compelled to admit that the Infinite exists, albeit in a transcendent manner. What Neo-Platonism is struggling against is a univocal conception of Being, as a homogeneous quality of the finite and the Infinite; and here Neo-Platonism is perfectly justifiable in its procedure. If existence means a determinate mode of existence -, as it must whenever it is predicated of any finite being -, then the infinite cannot even be said to exist. (89) Neo-Platonism, however, cannot uphold successfully the thesis that the One can generate .

Being without itself being related somehow to Being; or that, in a strict sense, it does not exist. What Neo-Platonism is endeavouring to save is the super-eminent transcendence of the One and in this endeavour its motives are perfectly legitimate. (90)

In the Thomist epistemology, the doctrine of analogy proposes to meet this very difficulty. What justifies the predicability of a concept (e.g. Being) of the finite and the infinite is the circumstance that we can distinguish, as regards this concept, between the contents of the concept (res significata) and the mode of its predication (modus significandi). (91) When we predicate the concept Being to the finite and the infinite, to the creature and the Creator, we would be fully justified, so long as we reserve to the Creator the 'mode of eminence' which is proper to Him by virtue of His infinity. And this predication would be meaningful inasmuch as it denotes a positive perfection. But it is not meaningful in a complete sense, since its modality is absolutely incomprehensible. (92) When we speak of a finite being as good, our intellect grasps the judgment in question because it can assign the exact manner in which the determinate goodness of that finite being can be so designated. But not such is the character of the goodness inhering in God; nor for that matter, of all the positive attributes we predicate of God analogically. For whereas in the creature these attributes refer to certain determinate qualities supervening upon the subject or suppositum and distinct from its essence, in God these attributes represent the self-subsistent unity of the divine essence, which cannot be conceived through the likeness of any 'species' to which the created intellect can

(93)
attain.

Here it should be noted that the validity of the analogical procedure rests, in the last analysis on the cardinal metaphysical principle which we have been expounding. Affirmative concepts are not predicated of God in such a way as to exclude a negative defect rather than to affirm a positive perfection, as Maimonides taught (Guide, I, 58); nor simply to denote a relationship of causality between Him and the creature, as others like Alain of Lille (Theol. Reg. 21, 26) held. Rather do these affirmative concepts denote the positive perfections pre-existing in God and in which creatures participate. (94) It follows, therefore, that in a strict ontological and logical sense, they apply primarily to God rather than to the creature. (95) We do not predicate goodness of things and then proceed to predicate it of God. Rather do we predicate goodness of things, because we discover in them a share of the self-subsisting goodness of God in which they participate in their capacity as the creatures of God. And this pre-supposes that goodness, like all the positive perfections which we discover fragmentarily in the creatures, pre-exist in an undivided unity in the First Being, who of the superabundance of His love and generosity, has freely chosen to communicate these perfections to the creatures that they might thereby share in the fullness of His infinite goodness. (96)

It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of the affiliation of the doctrine of analogy to the Dionysian doctrine of the self-diffusive character of Being. The analogical ascent from the finite to the infinite rests upon a tacit perception of a positive

'ontological kinship' between the finite and the infinite. From the standpoint of the finite this ontological kinship can never be ascertained conclusively: since at best it could be set up as a contingent, empirical postulate; and in this manner, its application to the infinite would be absolutely unwarranted. If it is to be raised to the dignity of a metaphysical principle, its roots must be sought beyond the finite. And if we are ever to bridge the gap between the finite and the infinite we must state the exact metaphysical relationship in which these two terms stand to each other. This the Dionysian doctrine of the self-diffusive character of the Good, conjoined to the Platonic doctrine of participation to which it is closely affiliated, proposes to settle. Upon this as its metaphysical groundwork, analogy can legitimately erect its epistemological structure, and show in what way the riches of the divine perfection lavished upon the creatures, in accordance with the measure of its merit, can be gleaned, as it were, in the reconstruction of our picture of the divine Being. Paradoxical as it might sound, the analogical ascent to the infinite is possible only because of a primordial movement of descent into the finite, on the part of the infinite. The a posteriori epistemological procedure of analogy is rooted in the a priori metaphysical presuppositions of Platonism and Neo-Platonism.

The analogical method, when applied to the concept Being, is found thus to settle at one stroke two acute problems: the problem of the unity-in-diversity of Being bequeathed in its insoluble formula upon philosophy by Parmenides; and the problem of a perfect

positive clue to the determination of the transcendent attributes of God. In the former case, being is conceived as unity unfolding itself in diverse ways and unequal degrees. ⁽⁹⁷⁾ That being should so unfold itself without losing the specific character of unity or identity pertaining to it, notwithstanding its diffusion in the many, is a problem which we have settled in the perspective of Neo-Platonism by invoking the two principles of the self-diffusiveness of Being and the incommensurability of its infinite perfection with its finite representations. Yet when this metaphysical problem has been settled, a logical epistemological problem remains to reckon with. Granted that the many flow from the one, as their source and fountainhead, what, indeed, is the exact relationship between these two terms to which the analogical concept of Being refers: And considering the actual structure of our consciousness and its grounding in experience, how does the perception of the one, as the First Principle of things, come about in the first place?

In the a prioristic ontology of Plato and the Neo-Platonists the determination of the existence and the reality of the infinite calls for no account, since it is with this existence and reality that ontology must set out. Rather does the existence of the finite call for such an account, inasmuch as it lacks the character of finality and absoluteness proper to the infinite. Of course chronologically and psychologically the infinite and its existence are posterior to the finite, since they dawn upon consciousness, as it were, at an ulterior stage in the philosopher's perception of reality. This is the significance of the Platonic doctrine of

reminiscence, which concedes a purely relative reality to the finite and employs it merely as a means to the discernment of the infinite, a transitional stage in the journey leading thereto. In an ontology, whose epistemological pre-suppositions are aposterioristic or empirical, like that of Aristotle and Aquinas, the philosopher must set out from the given reality of the finite in his determination of the existence and the status of the infinite. In this procedure, a whole elaborate methodology must be erected, no doubt. The infinite must possess the same predicates as the finite, since no other predicates can be discovered by our consciousness; but must possess them in a transcendent manner, if the character of infinitude proper to it is to be safeguarded. What warrants the contention that even at the point of their superlative perfection, these predicates preserve their specific or qualitative identity is the faith in the uniformity and consistency of the ontological order, as it were. This faith can never be rationalized from the standpoint of a purely empirical epistemology. To achieve this rationalization, philosophy must necessarily turn to the Platonic doctrine of participation; and transcend, as it were, the plane of empirical presuppositions. Aristotelianism is capable of achieving this rationalization with which the possibility of metaphysics as a science is bound up, because it is not committed to a pure empiricism.

It would seem that even for Platonism and Neo-Platonism the affirmation of a law of 'ontological consistency or uniformity'

governing the finite and the infinite remains an act of faith, which cannot be fully rationalized. Aristotelianism has - at least, the great merit of determining the existence and the reality of the infinite, from the standpoint of the given reality of that which is with which it starts and upon which it erects its metaphysical edifice. Thus it posits the infinite as the 'necessary condition' of the finite, whether the finite is envisaged as an entity in a process of motion or a term in the series of causation, - without which the very given reality of the finite would be totally inexplicable. But Aristotelianism achieves this result by virtue of its conviction that its metaphysical procedure is valid; a conviction which rests upon a tacit admission that the laws of being which it invokes in its demonstration are valid throughout -, and this, finally, presupposes an irreducible faith in the 'consistency' of the ontological order.

It ought to be candidly confessed, therefore, if the predicament of circular reasoning is to be avoided, that the Aristotelian - Thomist doctrine of analogy, rests indisputably on a Platonic - Neo-Platonic metaphysical groundwork. And this is not surprising, neither in the case of Aristotle nor in the case of Aquinas. Aristotle was the disciple of Plato, after all; and Aquinas achieves, as we have seen in the instance of his doctrine of Being-qua-Act and Being-qua-Good, a synthesis between the positive elements of Platonic idealism and Aristotelian realism. Whatever its metaphysical groundwork, analogy, it ought

to be remarked, posits the inclusion of the finite and the infinite in one category; and this it must do if it is ever to lay hold of the elusive reality of the infinite. And in this its procedure is not unjustifiable. For the denotation finite-infinite presupposes an element of unity, underlying the differentiation of the two terms. This denotation is clearly a dimensional denotation; or, rather, a denotation which has regard to the respective magnitudes of the finite and the infinite. Without an element of community between the finite and infinite, the very distinction between them becomes unthinkable. Between two realities absolutely distinct, no common term can be found; and therefore their very distinction cannot be affirmed. So that in the admission of a dimensional differentiation between the finite and the infinite, there is latent a tacit perception of an element of community in which they participate. This community, reduced to its bare ontological minimum, is found to be one of bare existence -, one must say of indeterminate existence, if the just pre-suppositions of negative theology which we have examined above are to be met. This indeterminate existence is the emptiest rational category which can be predicated of the infinite; it is so empty that nothing 'positive' is said in it about the infinite - since such is impossible. One can understand here the profound motives of speculative mysticism and Hegelianism in speaking of the Absolute as the 'coincidentia contradictorum' and ultimately
(98)
as the entity in which Being coincides with not-Being.

Now in the perception of an element of community between the

finite and the infinite we have demonstrated their participation in a common category, the category of Being, without, however, impairing in any way their irreducible distinction. This distinction, which we have described as dimensional, entails a relationship of dependence between the two terms. Need we repeat here that the assertion of this relationship of dependence is the positive contribution to ontology of Plato and the Neo-Platonists. The associated doctrines of participation and emanation state that the finite depends upon the infinite for its very being; derives its being from the infinite; is rooted in it as its ultimate ground and principle. And in this mode of dependence we have the most decisive clue to the relationship between the finite and the infinite without which a whole series of metaphysical problems would be left without any possibility of settlement.

* * * * *

It might be wondered of what relevance to our major problem is this incursion into pure ontology. This surprise is not unnatural. Yet the validity of the analogical method which we have been examining can be defended only once the metaphysical pre-suppositions upon which it rests are fully expounded. And this is what we have been attempting, in the light of Platonism and Neo-Platonism. With this remark we can resume our main discussion.

We have seen how the notion of the Act represents the principle of Being as well as the principle of activity, in

Aristotle and Aquinas. If things are and act, in and through the same ontological sign imprinted in their depths, as it were, then things stand to each other in the point of being as in the point of action, in exactly the same relationship. In the former type of relationship, we have discovered a clue to the existence of an 'Ens Realissimum', as the Fourth Way has shown. And this clue was successfully pursued up to its terminal point in the infinite, by virtue of our analogical conception of the matter. This relationship had to be specified in such a way as to reserve to the two terms (the finite and the infinite) their diversity without thereby abolishing their community; that is, their participation in an 'identical concept'. In thus specifying the relationship between the finite and the infinite in their participation in the category of Being, we discovered the clue to the solution of the Parmenidean dilemma of the one and the many, What gain can be expected now from applying the analogical method to the second type of relationship between the finite and the infinite?

The general character of the relationship between the finite and the infinite has been described as one of dependence. For the infinite was said to depend upon the infinite as its ground or principle; or rather to flow from it as from its source. Our analysis of the nature of this dependence revealed that, by virtue of its self-diffusive benevolence, the infinite communicates to the finite, first, its being, and second, its dynamic energy. And it is the latter 'gift' of the infinite that is called the

(99)
causality of the finite. The infinite is at the same time Goodness, Being and Act. In inviting the finite to share in its perfection, the infinite invites it at the same time to participate in its goodness, being and activity, through the same movement of overflowing generosity. And in this is found the ultimate justification of the causal dynamism of things. The problem respecting the justifiability of predicating being of the finite and the infinite is, thus, identical with the problem of the justifiability of predicating being of both these terms. Like the latter, this problem can be solved successfully only in analogical terms.

The aposterioristic approach to the first type of relationship between the finite and the infinite (i.e.: the relationship of Being) - notwithstanding its grounding in the apriori doctrine of participation - yielded us with the clue to the demonstration of the existence of God, as Ens Realissimum. We should expect that the second type of relationship - when considered from the standpoint of its inferior or dependent term, viz - the finite - should yield us with a clue to the demonstration of the existence of God, as First Cause. And this is, in point of fact, what it actually does. Now the centrality of the second type of relationship to Thomism can scarcely be exaggerated. The Fourth 'Way' which argues from grades of being is of Platonic origin and assumes, in Thomism, a minor importance. The predilection of Aquinas for the argument from cause is unmistakable. (100) We have no intention of recapitulating here the argument from cause

(second way) as given in the two summas. We can do no better than send to these works or to the discussion of Garrigou -
(101)
Lagrange, in God His Existence and Nature. What interests us here is the fact that the Aristotelian-Thomist argument from cause depends for its validity upon the validity of the causal principle, as a law of Being qua Being; since otherwise the transition from the creature to the creator would be unjustifiable. In defending this validity against the attacks of scepticism we had to show how causality, like being, is predicable of the finite and the infinite by reason of the 'law of kinship' which binds them together, in their relation one to the other as generated to generator. And in this endeavour the Dionysian doctrine of the self-diffusive character of the Good and the allied Platonic doctrine of participation proved more than remunerating.

The ground on which Al-Ghazali and the Ash'arites, as we have seen at length in the first and second chapters, repudiate the causal principle is their pre-occupation with reserving the prerogative of activity to God alone. An agent, in the genuine sense, they argue, must be omnipotent and omniscient, that is, must produce the totality of its effect and know the consequences of its activity to their minutest detail. No created agent, however, answers to these two conditions, because of the insufficiency of its power and the limitation of the scope of its consciousness. Ergo, God is the Sole Agent, inasmuch as He alone is omnipotent and omniscient. In the refutation of this occasionalist position two genuine difficulties can be noted, with which philosophy cannot decline to reckon. First : How indeed can the

concept of activity be predicated of the creator and the creature, when the Creator so far transcends the creature that no proportion between them can be found?; and second; How can the absolute power of the Almighty leave scope for the operation of secondary agents in the production of natural effects.?

We have already resolved the latter difficulty, in the perspective of Thomism. The possibility of a concurrent providence of the Creator and the creature is not grounded in the insufficiency of the divine power, as occasionalism alleges; but rather in the abundance of the divine love and the divine wisdom. God permits the autonomous causality of the creature that thereby the creature might communicate to other things the perfection it has received from Him; and in this manner, share in the perfection of the Almighty who is cause in the most pre-eminent sense. In this way, His love and His generosity are manifested unto all things, and through all things. And He likewise entrusts secondary agents with the execution of His providential designs that thereby the beauty of order enjoined by the precepts of His wisdom might be revealed, in and through the ordered hierarchy of inferior and superior agents. (102)

There remains the difficulty of the disproportionateness between the First Cause and the series of secondary causes. This disproportionateness, it would seem, makes the inclusion of the Finite and the Infinite, of God and the creature, in the same category of causality, totally unjustifiable. Like the difficulty which we have encountered in examining the predicability of being

to the finite and the infinite, this difficulty can be resolved through the application to the concept cause of the analogical method which we employed in settling the problem of the transcendence of the infinite. When we speak of the creator as cause, and the creature as cause, we mean the same thing; namely, an entity which bestows being, in one or other of its aspects, upon another entity. But we do not therewith mean the same thing, to the same degree, or in the same proportion. For the causality of the Creator reaches to the depths of things and summons them out of the darkness of not-being: and thus confers upon them the character of being, per se. And this is the exclusive prerogative of the Almighty who of the inexhaustible plenitude of His infinite perfection bestows being upon all things that are. (103) Yet, 'how is the inclusion of the power to bestow accidental being and being per se under the same concept justifiable' is seen, upon close scrutiny, to resolve itself into the question: 'How can we speak of being per accidens and being per se' in the same terms; and include relative and absolute being under the same concept of being?' This question, however, offers no difficulty except for an ontology which fails to perceive the analogical character of being. For were being a generic concept, then avowedly this inclusion would be altogether unjustifiable. In the order of reality as we know it a genus manifests itself in determinate forms, through the supervention upon it of specific differentiae. If a member of that genus, possessing in a unity of self-subsistence all the differentiae pertaining to that genus to a superlative degree, were hypothetically assumed to exist, then

it would be impossible to differentiate it, and as such, it cannot even be said to belong to the genus in question. Nor do we know, in the order of reality, of an entity which possesses all the positive perfections existing in all other genera. Now the First Being is not only said to possess all the positive perfections pertaining to all things to a superlative degree, but also to be their very source and origin. Such an entity if it were ever shown to exist, would be such as to be incapable of inclusion in any genus whatever. (104)

God is First Cause, therefore, in an absolute sense; because He alone can bestow the character of being, per se. Inasmuch as other created things can bestow upon other created things the character of accidental being, by imparting to them their participated perfections, to that extent they can be said to be causes, albeit in a different proportion.

IV

Miracle and the Incommensurability of the Created Order with
the Infinite Goodness of God.

We are now in a position to settle the Averroist-Ghazalian controversy over the question of rationalizing miracle. The radical motive of Averroes in dismissing miracle as philosophically irrelevant, as we have seen, was his endeavour to save the unity and integrity of the cosmic order. The admission of miracle, Averroes alleges, threatens to impair this unity and this

integrity by driving a wedge, as it were, into the heart of the cosmic order and deflecting the course of its uniform movement. Al-Ghazali, on the other hand, in his endeavour to rationalize miracle, erects a metaphysical edifice in which, as we have seen, the miraculous can have no genuine role to play. All cosmic events, he argues, come about through the direct and immediate intervention of God. But if by the miraculous is meant the extraordinary and heterogeneous intervention of the Deity in the cosmic sphere, as we have seen, then the manner in which every cosmic event comes about is miraculous in precisely this sense. Instead of explaining the extraordinary and unique character of miracle, as an instance of the heterogeneous intervention of God in history with a view to executing His providential designs, Al-Ghazali succeeds thus in explaining miracle away by loading every historic event with the positive contents of the miraculous and the extraordinary.

In order to settle the problem of miracle successfully, Philosophy must begin with stating the exact problem it proposes to grapple with, whenever it is confronted with the historic

reality of miracle as an irreducible fact. Metaphysically speaking, the problem of miracle raises two cognate problems with which we ought now to wrestle. There is in the first place the problem which the miraculous raises with regard to the 'uniformity of God's ways', as dictated by the counsels of His wisdom. If this uniformity of God's ways is to be successfully interpreted in philosophic language, then a certain mode of necessity must be ascribed to the cosmic order in its internal structure. A deistic world-view, similar to that of Averroes, would naturally promise to achieve this interpretation with positive success; but this it does, like Naturalistic Determinism and Fatalism, at the cost of the genuine reality of God's omnipotence and His sovereign role in the universe, by reason of its conception of the absolute autonomy of cosmic life.

Now if the omnipotence of God is conceded, in the interest of a genuine conception of the divine perfection, as we have seen; and if the rationality of His ways, as manifested in the uniformity of natural operations is conceded too, then: 'How,' one might ask in the second place, 'can God do something outside the order of His eternally ordained providence, without infringing the rational unity of cosmic life and without violating the irrevocable decrees of His wisdom?' (105)

To resolve the former problem, we must begin by determining the exact mode of necessity which can be ascribed to the natural order. A metaphysic of pure contingency has been surrendered, as in the case of Ash'arite and Ghazalian occasionalism, on two accounts: first, its misconception of the nature of Being in its

relation to activity; and second, its derogation of the perfection of God and of His sovereign wisdom. Yet the fate of a metaphysic of absolute determinism, as that of Averroes, did not prove any happier. Granted that our critique of these two types of metaphysics is valid, at least as far as it goes, then we must proceed now to a positive determination of the precise 'modality' which can be ascribed to the natural order -, unless our analysis is to remain on the plane of negative contentions.

In grappling with this problem in the Summa Contra Gentiles, Aquinas seeks the roots of this 'modality' in a sphere which borders upon the spheres of the two antithetic errors of pure contingency and absolute determinism, but remains distinct from both of them. As is customary to his dialectical procedure, he begins by subjecting to severe scrutiny these two antithetic errors. (106) Determinism finds the roots of the absolute necessity it assigns to the cosmic order in the indisputable reality of God's necessary will of His own essence. Yet determinism misconceives the nature of this necessary self-volition in its relation to the created order. When this nature has been specified the twofold problem of the mode of necessity which can be legitimately ascribed to the created order and the problem of the possibility of God's miraculous intervention into the course of His eternally-ordained providence would be settled.

The divine will has the divine essence for its object and this it wills of absolute necessity. (107) Yet the striking aspect of the matter is that, inasmuch as that essence comprises all things in itself as their Principle or cause, God wills other things in and

through the same self-centered movement of self-volition. ⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ But this 'aspect' of His self-volition entails no necessity in God, because creation adds nothing to the fullness of the divine essence. This essence stands fulfilled since all eternity, so that creation must be said to stand to the divine will in a position of utter indeterminateness. 'Why should God have brought things into being', can thus be answered in no other terms than the free and gratuitous decree of divine love and generosity. God invites the creation to share in His likeness that the boundlessness of His Goodness might be communicated unto all things. And thus the divine goodness is shared by all things through multiplication in the multiplicity of good things. ⁽¹⁰⁹⁾

In an emanationist metaphysics of the crude type, the twofold movement of divine self-volition and of the volition of other things is represented as one of 'natural necessity' or natural consequence. Things are alleged to emanate from God as the rays emanate from the sun, and water emanates from a stream. Yet clearly this emanationist view endangers the reality of divine volition and divine consciousness. If things were to emanate from God, by a 'necessity of nature'; then He would be unconscious of this process of emanation transpiring within Him, as it were; if by a 'necessity of knowledge' then He would be conscious of it, yet would be powerless to bring it about or arrest it as His free will decrees. And in both these assumptions there inheres a positive detraction of the divine perfection. To guard against this danger, we must affirm categorically that God acts freely, because He acts intelligently; and that, in creation as in all

divine activity, there inheres a movement of free volition
(110)
grounded in the movement of divine wisdom.

It might be urged at this point that the necessary relationship in which creation stands to God might be rooted in the necessity of the divine justice if not in the necessity of the divine nature. Yet this view is found, upon close examination, to hold no greater promise of success. Prior to the existence of the universe which was brought forth into being through the spontaneous decree of the divine will, a 'debt of justice' incumbent upon
(111)
God is wholly unthinkable. In the point of its being, of its incipency, the creation stands to the divine will in a position of utter indeterminateness. Outside the divine goodness, nothing can be enjoined in the justification of God's decree to bring the universe into being. With respect to that goodness that which conduces to its fulfillment might be said to be 'due' to it and,
(112)
therefore, to be enjoined by justice. But this clearly entails a mode of necessity intrinsic to the movement of divine self-volition rather than an extraneous necessity of compulsion, to
(113)
which the Almighty must necessarily succumb. The ultimate ground of this necessity is the counsel of divine wisdom and the
(114)
immutability of His decrees. Inasmuch as the divine power is not wanting in efficacy, a 'necessity of ordinance' might be found to ensue upon the free decree of the Almighty to bring the
(115)
universe into being. But this is, in fact, a 'conditional necessity', or as Aquinas puts it elsewhere, a necessity of
(116)
supposition. If we start from the actual fact of creation - the

fact namely, that God has actually brought the creation into being; and if we recall the immutability of the divine will and the irrevocability of His sovereign decrees, then the creation is found to be necessary, through the necessity of God's eternal design to bring it into being. (117) But here we are arguing backward from the fact of creation. If we abstract the actual fact of creation and the condition of time implied in this fact, and consider the creation in its relation to the divine will absolutely, then not even this 'necessity of supposition' can be admitted. And hence, in an absolute sense, the creation stands to the divine will in a position of utter contingency; or what amounts to the same thing, creation depends on the sheer decree of the Almighty, whose sole principle of determinacy is the divine wisdom.

When we turn to the creation in itself, and subsequently to the act in which it was brought forth, we can discover in it a 'necessity of causal order'. Prior to God's decree to bring the creation about, of course, no causal order could be spoken of except in relation to God as First Cause. (118) But in this relation only a 'necessity of supposition' was conceded. With regard to the 'causal order' pertaining to the multitude of things in their relation to their causal (or essential) principles or in their interrelation severally one to the other, we discover a threefold mode of absolute necessity. (119)

1. First, in relation to the being of the thing into which the aforesaid essential principles enter as constituents thereof. Thus owing to their composition of matter and form, composite

bodies are corruptible of necessity. But in incomposite substances (e.g. separate substances) this corruptibility is not necessary.

2. Second, in relation to the parts of these principles constituting the composite. Thus there is a necessity in relation to matter and a necessity in relation to form in such composites. For instance, with respect to the former, man who has a mixed body must of necessity have the humours, elements and organs indispensable to this body. With respect to the latter, he must of necessity be a rational animal, since this is precisely the 'form' of man.

3. Third, in relation to the properties consequent upon the matter or form in the composite. Thus it is necessary that a saw be hard since it is made out of iron.

It is to be noticed that the type of 'causal necessity' outlined above relates to the material and formal causes taken in conjunction, as in the first case, or taken each separately, as in the second and third cases. Causality is thus taken as the clue to the determination of the exact mode of necessity which can be legitimately ascribed to things. As would be naturally expected, in addition to the necessity consequent upon the material and formal causes, two other types of necessity pertaining to the efficient and final causes could be discovered. With respect to the former, Aquinas distinguishes a necessity of 'action' and a necessity of 'passion'. The first of these types of necessity is accidental, since the relation of the effect to the agent is like the relation of accidents to the essential principles from which

(120)
they flow. For the effect to follow necessarily upon the action of the agent, two conditions must be fulfilled: potentiality to receive in the patient and 'conquest' of the patient by the agent. If these two conditions are fulfilled absolutely and always, there will be absolute necessity in the efficient cause: as in those things which act necessarily and always. If, on the other hand, owing to defective power or the hindrance of an extraneous factor, these two conditions are not fulfilled, then this
(121)
necessity would not be absolute.

With regard to the final cause, a mode of 'finalistic determinism' can be found both in voluntary and natural agents. In the latter case this determinism is consequent upon the 'form' proper to the agent; in the former upon the perception of the end proposed to the will 'under the aspect of the good'. The finalistic necessity which determines the activity of the voluntary agent has ~~no~~ scope only where the end is concerned. Therefore it leaves the will undetermined as regards the means, inasmuch as the fulfillment of an end necessarily proposed to
(122)
the will can be achieved in a variety of conceivable ways.

The ontological order, born of divine wisdom, no less than divine power, is thus seen to be an order which is determined inwardly by the necessary causal laws pertaining to being. In creating this order, the divine wisdom has enjoined that it should be endowed with the perfection of being, and likewise with the perfection of order and 'lawfulness', which pertains to genuine being. It is true in this injunction the divine power has been

freely curtailed; made to recede before the divine wisdom, as it were: but only that it might yield thereby to the ordinance of the divine love. And in this respect the curtailment here described becomes a positive manifestation of the divine wisdom and love, rather than of the powerlessness of the Almighty. In the same way, the divine wisdom has conferred on things the character of contingency - which is as proper to genuine being as necessity. Thus God has permitted the operation of secondary contingent causes: has receded before the creature, as it were, - that the immensity of His love and generosity might be manifested in the most glaring way. (123) And thus, in this ontological order, necessity and contingency co-mingle and intertwine, revealing thereby the fullness of the divine generosity and love.

* * * * *

In assigning the ultimate reason for creation, we found in God's will of His goodness the ground of the exteriorization of the divine will. (124) This will, we said, is determined necessarily by the divine goodness as its object; but inasmuch as this goodness stands in no need of anything extrinsic to it, owing to its self-sufficiency, whatever exists outside it is found to stand to it in a position of sheer superfluity. God, therefore, does not will the creation of necessity, because it adds nothing to the perfection of His essence. (125)

Now if the ultimate reason of creation is the infinite goodness of God, then any conceivable created order would be incommensurable with this infinite goodness inasmuch as it can never exhaust its infinite perfection. The possibility of solving

the latter part of our problem is thus grounded in this very incommensurability between the infinite perfection of the divine goodness and the finitude of any created order contrived by God. Whether God can act outside the order of His providence is thus seen to resolve itself into two cognate questions: whether God can act freely; and whether in this free activity the divine will and the divine intellect can extend beyond what was actually decreed by the divine will. The former question has been answered in the affirmative. The latter question must now be attended to.

The mode of divine activity has been described as rational, in so far as the divine will was said to be determined by the divine intellect in the production of its effects. But the divine intellect -, which is one with the divine essence, embraces all things, possible or real, as flowing from this essence by way of likeness. ⁽¹²⁶⁾ It follows, therefore, that no degree of finite perfection actually decreed by the divine will can exhaust the fullness of the divine essence, in its infinity; nor consequently, can it set any limits to the boundlessness of the creative insight of the Almighty. ⁽¹²⁷⁾ God can act outside the order of His providence owing to the disproportionateness of the created order with His infinite goodness and knowledge, without violating thereby the rational unity of His providence or transgressing against the precepts of His sovereign goodness.

'But would not this account of the matter', the critic might object, 'jeopardize the universality and the certainty of divine providence?' The created order is said to depend exclusively on

on the self-determined will of the Almighty which is said to be the 'sufficient reason' of the specific structure in accordance with which this order was fashioned. 'Yet would not this amount to surrendering the results of our previous analysis and reducing the whole created order to the status of sheer contingency?'

To resolve this difficulty we have only to recall the exact character of necessity which can be ascribed to this order, from the standpoint of divine wisdom -, and the manner in which the immanent 'causal necessity' of the created order is related to the spontaneous determinism of the divine will, ⁽¹²⁸⁾ Considered in itself, the created order is causally determined - in the manner we have outlined above: the inferior in it depending upon the superior and the superior determined by the laws intrinsic to it. Once this order is posited, it forthwith becomes subject to this type of determinational pattern. But for it to be posited, in the first place, a primordial condition must be fulfilled: the decree of the divine will. This divine will, as we have seen, is determined by the laws of God's inner unfoldment of His essence in accordance with the immutable precepts of His wisdom. In this respect nothing can be effected by the divine will which has not been foreseen by the divine intellect. And this is the exact sphere of divine providence -, a providence which has been circumscribed by the divine will and the divine intellect since all eternity. Considering the immutability of His ways, not even the Almighty Himself is capable of effecting anything outside the order of His eternally decreed providence, without violating the rationality of His ways. Yet inasmuch as He is not bound by any

determinate order of creation, - especially with respect to the initial establishment of things, He can legitimately be said to be able to initiate a causal series which represents a positive departure from the normally assigned course of events in nature -,
(129)
and this is what is signified by miracle.

To specify the manner in which this comes about, we must consider, once more, the particular effect ~~in~~ its relation to its proximate cause, on the one hand; and to the ultimate cause on the other. It must be avowed that normally an effect comes about through the agency of the proximate cause, which actualizes its virtual potentialities. But the efficacy through which this proximate cause is capable of actualizing its effect is itself
(130)
ultimately derived from the Universal Cause. Proximate agents stand to this cause as intermediaries or subordinates entrusted with the execution of His sovereign orders. Yet there is nothing to prevent this Universal Cause from intervening directly in the course of natural events, and bringing about a certain effect in a manner freely assigned by Him; dispensing thus with the services of His subordinates, as it were; with a view to
(131)
manifesting His power or advancing His Sovereign designs.

If it is objected that this extraordinary intervention in the normal course of events threatens the integrity of God's providence and the immutability of His ways, it would be retorted that miracle itself, as a positive departure from the normal course of events, is contained in the order of God's eternal providence; since nothing escapes God's eternal fore-

knowledge and fore-ordination or happens contrary thereto. (132)

Within the eternal framework of that providence the miraculous and the extraordinary have as much scope as the ordinary and the natural, but never without it, since outside it there is absolutely nothing. If it is further objected, on the other hand, that God's freely ordained departure from the normal pattern imposed upon things in the universe, would impair the unity and the integrity of the natural order, it would be retorted that such a contention rests upon a sheer misconception of the natural. We can describe as unnatural that which happens without reason altogether, or contrary to its norm or principle. But that a patient be acted upon by the First Agent, and thereby brought forth from the state of potentiality to the state of actuality - without the action of the proximate agent, involves no genuine (133) rational difficulty and violates no genuine rational principle.

God's disposition of certain agents directly and immediately can be likened to the disposition by the principal agent of an instrument he has designed for a given purpose. Secondary agents, being the instruments of God, might be moved by Him freely without violence either to their proper function or their proper nature. (134) With respect to the contention that this departure infringes the norm or principle of the agent's natural mode of operation, it should be observed that the First Norm or Measure of all things is God. Whatever norm or principle is implanted in a thing by Him is natural to it. It is to the extent an agent operates in conformity with this norm that its operation is said to be natural. If it were, however, to operate otherwise

by reason of a novel 'principle or norm' imparted to it by God, its operation would be natural for exactly the same reason: that in and through its proper 'norm', it conforms with the First Measure of all things. Thus God might choose to effect certain alterations in His workmanship, like an artist who retouches his work of art, without thereby violating the laws of its nature; (135) because whatever He does is done in accordance with the counsel of His wisdom which is the measure of all natural things and the ultimate principle of their rationality. (136)

Thus the rational possibility of miracle is ultimately reducible to the spontaneity of the divine will in its relation to the order of secondary causes and in the incommensurability of divine goodness with any determinate order of being, conceived by the divine intellect and executed by the divine will. God can work, outside the order of nature, in a manner exceeding the powers of natural agents, (137) because these agents derive from Him the specific powers and the specific role normally assigned to them. If He should freely decree to assign to these agents an extraordinary role dictated by the precepts of His sovereign wisdom, then nothing can be legitimately adduced against His title to dispose of His workmanship as He pleases for His greater glory and for the advancement of His grand providential designs.

Conclusion.

The analysis of the causal principle which we have attempted, in the preceding pages, represents an endeavour to defend the validity of causality against the sceptical claims of theistic occasionalism. The radical error of occasionalism, as we have seen, consists in its failure to perceive the positive significance of causality for any genuine metaphysical or theological world-view. In its endeavour to safeguard the absolute uniqueness and sovereignty of God, occasionalism strips the created order of the positive ontological predicates of genuine being, reserving them exclusively to the Almighty. Yet, in the naiveness of its enthusiasm, it fails to perceive that whatever threatens the solidity of the metaphysical substructure upon which it establishes the cosmic throne of the Almighty, threatens in a similar manner the solidity of that throne itself.

In substantiating this thesis, we were confronted with the question: 'In what sense does a positive conception of causality contribute to the conception of the genuine perfection of the ontological order? The examination of the causal principle has revealed that causality affords us with the clue to determining the precise relationship between the finite and the infinite, between the creature and the Creator. This relationship has been described as one of dependence. But instead of disputing the reality of this dependence of the creature upon the Creator,

occasionalism loads it with the character of absoluteness. And that is precisely its ultimate motive in repudiating the reality of the causal principle.'

To answer this question, we were led to determine the exact status of causality as a predicate of the ontological order. The determination of this status, it will be recalled, rested on the perception of a law of ontological fecundity rooted in the very nature of Being, in its affiliation to the Good. The perfection of the ontological order, we argued, demands that this order should be conceived as dynamic, as pregnant with the virtualities of its own self-propagation. An inert, ontological order, however much it might be found to 'depend' on its Author, is an order which is deficient in this very quality; and, therefore, an order which is lifeless and barren. And it is on account of this barrenness that such an order is in the last analysis, unworthy of the perfection and generosity of its Sovereign Author.

The question respecting the status of causality, as contributing to the perfection of being, was found, however, to be distinct from the question respecting the positive validity of causality as a genuine category of the ontological order. The former question was concerned with the 'why' of causality: its metaphysical justification as a genuine concept, from the standpoint of the perfection of the created order and the sovereignty of its Author. The latter question, on the other hand, was concerned with the 'how' of causality: its phenomenological status as a principle among other metaphysical principles. To

determine this phenomenological status of causality, we had to seek the roots of causality in Being. Being, we argued, utters itself out in dynamic activity, by virtue of its munificent character whereby it communicates its substantial perfection, or on the ~~one~~ hand; and by virtue of its inner luminosity whereby it reveals its inner being, on the other. Were it not for this self-revelation, Being would remain hidden and mysterious. The clue to this twofold self-revelatory character of Being was discovered, it will be recalled, in the Dionysian Conception of Being as Good and in the Aristotelian conception of Being as Act. These two conceptions, as we have seen, had to be integrated into a synthetic conception of Being in its relation to causality -, a task successfully achieved by Aquinas.

The sceptical pre-suppositions of theistic occasionalism had thus to be rejected on grounds inhering in the nature of Being, on the one hand, and in grounds inhering in the nature of knowledge, as the self-revelation of Being, on the other. The strength of the occasionalist case consisted in its apparent success in emptying the ontological order of any causal content, and confining causality to the unique relationship between the universe and its First Cause. Yet the latter aspect of its solution of the causal problem was found to conflict with the former, so that the validity of causality, as a predicate of the order of Being, had to be restored through the extension of the allegedly unique relationship between the Creator and the creature to the whole ontological order, by pronouncing it

a category of Being qua Being. In this endeavour two genuine difficulties had to be met: the validity of the allegedly necessary relationship between Being and causality, and the legitimacy of the inclusion of the Creator and the creature in the same causal category. The latter of these two difficulties was resolved from the stand-point of Thomism, through the analogical conception of Being and causality -, a conception which found the clue to the legitimacy of predicating Being and causality of the finite and the infinite in a law of 'ontological kinship' between them, which left unaffected the 'order of eminence' in which they stood one to the other and the dimensional discrepancy between them. The former difficulty was resolved in terms of a metaphysic of Being whose foremost ontological predicate was that of dynamic energy.

As a predicate of the ontological order, causality was thus seen to represent a positive sign of the perfection of Being, conceived as vital and dynamic. But there was another aspect in which causality was found to represent an indirect sign of this perfection in the logical order itself. Causality, it was shown, is not only a quality of Being; it is likewise a nexus between conditions or entities, hypothetical or real. The occasionalist metaphysics of contingent Being, as we have seen, destroys at one stroke the character of causality both as a positive ontological quality and a necessary logical nexus. This is how Al-Ghazali refuses to concede the validity of the category of necessity, outside the order of abstract logical relations.

Having emptied the order of Being of any inner dynamism, he is inescapably committed to an epistemology in which real entities can only be represented in unrelated isolation. It follows, on his argument, that no transition from one order of reality (the order of effects) to another order (the order of causes) is possible. Such a transition is possible only in the realm of abstract concepts.

The error of Al-Ghazali in this procedure consists, as we have seen, in his failure to perceive that the very validity of necessary logical relations, in the order of thought, rests on the validity of these relations, in the order of being, to which the former must correspond, if they are to remain genuine relations. These logical relations are ultimately grounded, as Maimonides shrewdly perceived, in the generic structure of the real, rather than in the representations of the imagination. And it is on the former that the human intellect feeds, as it were, rather than the latter.

A causally-related order of Being bespeaks the perfection of Being, inasmuch as it conceives of the members of this order as bound up by a law of ontological kinship. It is, of course, difficult to grasp how a universe of truly unrelated entities can be imagined to exist; since every entity in such a universe would constitute a world of its own with its own laws and its own processes. The continuity of cosmic life would become altogether unthinkable, on this hypothesis; as indeed the concurrence of any series of cosmic conditions; and things would stand in jealous

aloofness one from the other. Although occasionalism concedes the validity of a series of necessary logical relations - to which there must correspond a parallel series of real ontological relations in which the former are rooted, it nevertheless repudiates the reality and necessity of the causal nexus. Yet the causal nexus, whether its necessity is conceded or not, is the only positive relation in which the 'jealous aloofness' of things can be surmounted, inasmuch as real entities are said to go beyond themselves, to issue out of themselves, as it were, only in this mode of dynamic communication of self. And here we find ourselves, at our initial starting-point: causality is ultimately grounded in the self-diffusive character of Being.

* * * * *

There remains one final question to settle. Causality has been vindicated as a concept whose roots lie in the metaphysical sphere. The repudiation of causality by scepticism, as in the case of Hume, is bound up, however, with the repudiation of the possibility of metaphysical knowledge. The necessity of the causal nexus, as an a priori category, is rejected on the grounds that no positive a priori categories can apply to the empirical realm, even if such are said to exist. Although it is beyond the scope of the present discussion, it can be shown successfully that the Kantian retort to Hume cannot be accepted as final. For Kant refuses to concede the metaphysical validity of causality, notwithstanding his admission of its validity as a transcendental a priori concept, which like all transcendental concepts, can

apply to the empirical realm, without forfeiting its a priori extraction. The metaphysical validity of causality, however, cannot be surrendered on two major accounts: First, the significance of causality as a clue to the existence of God is bound up with its validity as a metaphysical concept. Kant surrenders the causal concept in the demonstration of the existence of God in the Fourth Antinomy of Pure Reason on precisely this score: that causality is valid only as a transcendental concept. Second, a complete refutation of scepticism is impossible, except in the perspective of a positive vindication of the possibility of metaphysics as a science, in which the causal principle must play a decisive role. In this respect the endeavour of Kant to disprove the sceptical pre-suppositions of Hume amounts to meeting Humean scepticism half-way. The positive validation of metaphysics as a science, is, of course, beyond the scope of the present essay. That is why it did not figure in the foregoing discussion, save to a minor extent. Nor did the theological starting-point of our problem make the treatment of this question imperative. For theistic occasionalism, despite its sceptical assumptions, pre-supposes tacitly the validity of its own metaphysical procedure in positing God, as the First Principle of things. And however false its conception of the nature of metaphysical knowledge, the critical question respecting the validity and scope of metaphysics is not an issue which criticism must imperatively join with sceptical occasionalism.

With this the thread of the argument can be relinquished. The limited scope of our initial problem having been compassed

we can leave the latter problem with no further effort to settle it. Scepticism, we believe, can be silenced only once this is successfully and completely achieved. But the present essay was not designed as a complete and final refutation of scepticism. Any positive success achieved in our foregoing endeavour to validate the causal principle, it is true, would naturally weaken the sceptical position. Yet the task of silencing scepticism conclusively is the perennial task of all positive philosophy.

NOTES

Introduction.

- (1) Met. I. Chs. 1 & 2, pp. 981b - 982b, & An. Post. I. Ch.2, II. Ch.11.
- (2) Tahafut at-Tahafut, P. 520.
- (3) Ibid. P. 522.
- (4) Ch. 69.
- (5) Q. III., art. 7.
- (6) S. Theol. Ia. Q.23, art. 8.

Chapter One.

- (1) i.e. Al-Farabi and Ibn Sina, as the notable leaders of the Peripatetic philosophic school in the East, - otherwise known as the Neo-Platonists. Whenever unqualified reference to 'the Philosophers' occurs in the subsequent pages, it should be taken to relate to the Peripatetic Neo-Platonists of the East.
- (2) The predilection of the Arabian Philosophers for the Neo-Platonist metaphysics of unity is the one decisive respect in which Islam played a conclusive limitative role in determining the direction if not the contents of Arabian Metaphysical speculation.

(3) On this story the reader can consult with profit :

De Boer - The History of Phil. in Islam, London, 1933.

O'Leary - The History of Arabic Thought.

Schmolders - Essai sur les écoles phil. chez les Arabes, Paris, 1842.

Asin Polacios - Algazel, Zaragoza, 1901. Int.pp.1-119.

(4) Miguel Asin Polacios gives a Spanish translation of the text of question 17 of the Tahafut, which represents the basis of the present analysis; as well as the latter part of question 16 which forms the prologue to question 17 - in his Algazel, dogmatica, moral, ascetica - App. II. pp. 774-818.

An analytical account of the contents of Tahafut al-Falasifah and Tahafut at-Tahafut can be found in Museon, yrs. 1888 and 1889 (pp.613-37; pp. 5-20) - by A.F. Mehren.

S. Munk is one of the first Orientalists to point out the importance of Al-Ghazali's sceptical implications in Mélanges, pp. 378-79.

(5) Tahafut al-Falasifah, P. 257.

In Ihīa', Vol. I, P.26, Al-Ghazali explains how astronomy (lit. the science of the stars علم النجوم) can prove injurious to man's faith, by launching them upon the quest of causes of things other than God.

(6) Tahafut, pp. 275-6.

(7) Tahafut, p. 278.7

«الاعتدال بين ما يُعتقد في العادة شيئاً وما يُعتقد شيئاً ليس
ضرورياً عندنا. بل كل شيئ ليس هذا ذات وذا ذات هذا
ولا اثبات احدهما يقتضي لاثبات الآخر، ولا نفيه يقتضي
لنفي الآخر، فليس من ضرورة وجود احدهما وجود الآخر
وعدم ضرورة عدم احدهما عدم الآخر، مثل البرق والشرب
والشبع والاكل واسحقاذه ونحو النار... دهم، جزاً».

(8) Ibid. P. 279.

(9) On the deceptive character of sense-experience and
the intuitive (Hads) origin of certitude, cf. Monqidh, pp. 72ff.

On the dependence of knowledge on divine revelation, cf.
infra, pp. 444, and Tahafut, pp. 285-6.

(10) cf. Tahafut, p. 294.

For those Mutakallims (Ash'arites) who recognized no
limitation of any kind on God's power, c.f. infra, Ch. II., Sect.V.

(11) Infra, Ch. II. pp. 93ff.

(12) «والمعلوم عندنا من القول ان يخرج جسم من جوف جسم،

كما يخرج الجنين من بطن الأم» Iqtisad, p. 45.

The Arabic word for generation, Tawallud, derives from the
same root as begetting or giving birth, - a linguistic fact which
gives plausibility to Al-Ghazali's argument.

(13) Ibid. «اذكونا حادثة مفراً مثله دغير»

cf. supra, P. 20.

"وقد كلف أنه لو كان مخلقة الله لقد رأت مخلقة (14) Iqtisad, P.45. حركة اليد دون حركة الخاتم ... ولو لم يكن العلم متولداً من إرادة الله على أن يخلق إرادة دون العلم أو العلم دون الحياة "

(15) The same argument is set forth in 'Ihia', IV, 220. Al-Bhazali writes:

"وكن بعض المقدمات مرتبة على البعض في الحدوث ترتيباً شرطياً على الشرط ، فلا تصدر من القدرة انزائية إرادة إلا بعد علم وعلم لا بعد حياة ولا حياة إلا بعد محل الحياة . وكما لا يجوز أن يقال أن الحياة تحصل من الجسم الذي هو شرط الحياة ، فكذلك في سائر المقدمات التي هي مرتبة على بعضها في الظهور ، فبما ظهرت للعامة وبغضها لم يظهر إلا للحدا صالحة شقين متراكبين ، وإلا فلا يتقدم متقدماً ولا شيئاً آخر مما يحدهما ... وكذلك جميع أفعال الله تعالى ، ولا بد من أن تكون أفعاله عتياً بعضها من بعض ، تعالى الله عن قول أبي حنيفة علواً كبيراً . وإلى هذا قوله تعالى ... " وما خلقتنا السموات والأرض وما بينهما سبعين ... " فلا يابى السموات والأرض حدث على ترتيب واجب وحده لا يزعم أنه يتصور أن يكون إلا كما حدث على هذا الترتيب الذي وجدنا . فإما أن يأخذ من غير ما هو متعارف شرطه ، والمشرط قبل الشرط محال . وإجمالاً لا بد منه بكونه مقدرًا ."

Maimonides (Guide, I, 73, Prop. 10 & 6) attributes the limitation of God's power to the sphere of possibility to the mutakallimin.

The law of 'relational conditionality' is attributed by Averroes to the same mutakallimin, except Abul-Ma'ali. cf. Tahafut at-Tahafut, pp. 521, 522, 538, 541-2. Of this more in sequel.

(16) cf. Iqtisad. pp. 45-46.

(17) *Iqtisad*, P.100.

«ليس وجود الشيء به بل عنه ومنه»

(18) *Ibid.*

(19) Al-Ghazali puts it in *Tahafut*, P.280.

«فمن أين يأمن الخلق أن يكون في صائر الوجود على حساب
يغيب من هذه الحوادث عند حصول ملاقاته بغيره، أو
أن ثابتة ليست تنعدم ولا هي أجسام متحركة فتتغير
(ما نذكر في المباحث) بل لو انقضت أو غابت لذكرنا التفرقة
وضوحاً أن تحت سائر ما شأنا».

(20) *La Pensée de Ghazzali*, P.9.

(21) *Sc.*, from the picture of God depicted by Muhammad, whereby God is presented as a "superhuman personality dominating everything". -L.cit.

(22) Carra de Vaux writes - Ghazali, P.70.

"Sa pensée (Ghazali) est dominée par la vision, presque l'obsession de la volonté divine, de cette volonté créatrice et toute-puissante qui produit tout à son gré, au-dessous de laquelle il n'y a que fini et à laquelle on ne demande pas de raison ni de compte. C'est bien cette souveraine puissance que Ghazali est habitué à reverer; le reste se rapetisse à ses yeux; l'immensité, la fécondité, l'antiquité de la matière ne l'impressionnent plus."

(23) *Mishkat*, PP.113-14.

(24) *Ibid.*

(25) cf. *Ihya'*, IV, P.212.

(26) In 'Ayyuhal walad', Al-Ghazali defines rawakkul as complete resignation to God's will, and faith in the irrevocability of His decrees. Hypocrisy, on the other hand, is described as the 'glorification of creatures' and the belief that they are capable of bringing about misery or with-holding it. -L.cit. P.40

Similarly in 'Ihya' (IV, PP.195-6), the highest stage of asceticism (Zuhd) is described as the "turning of the heart" in its entirety to God, whereby the ascetic desires and seeks nothing save God, "since to seek anything, other than God is a subtle form of polytheism."

This interpretation of the cardinal moral-religious virtues in function of metaphysical-theological concepts is only one instance of the great synthetic acumen of Al-Ghazali.

(27) 'Ihya', IV, P.213

(28) فبإد الله المخلصين شاصدا بنور الله شركون القلوب
منها مظهرها كما شاصد جميع الضمائر تكون القلوب مظهرها، وعرفوا
أن غلط الضمائر في ذلك كغلط النحلة مثلها لو كانت تدب
على الماء غد فتدعى رأس القلم سوء الكاغذ ولم يعتد صرحا إلى
اليه دأب صابع، فظنوا عن صاحب اليد، فغلطت و ظننت أن
القلم صرح المستد للبيان، و ذلك لشعر صرحا عن مجازة
رأس القلم لضمير حد قسري. فذلك من لم ينشرح بندر الله تعالى
صدره بسلام قصرته صيرته عن ملو حيلة جبار السخافات والخرق
ومشاهدة كونه قاصدا وراز الال " Ibid. P.214

On this simile of the ant and the writer cf. also: L.cit. P.27.

On the testimony of Maimonides (Guide I, ch.73, Prop.6) the theory according to which ignorance of the Real Cause is the source of

belief in the causality of things is one of the tenets of Islamic Kalam.

On significance of this theory, taken up in Tahafut as we have seen in the discussion of occult causes, cf. infra, pp. 47ff.

(29) The light-imagery of God's all-pervasive presence in things and its undiscernability owing to its dazzling brightness recurs in Mishkat, PP. 119-20.

(30) The same argument is re-stated in 'Al-Qawa'id ul-'Asharah', where Al-Ghazali writes:

« القاعدة التاسعة : المداومة على المراقبة ، ولا طرفة عين يغيب عن الله سبحانه وتعالى . فمن دأب على مراقبة قلبه لله سبحانه وتعالى وتعالى عنه عبد الله وجد الله واحداً . وعلم اليقين يحصل ذلك من محلة ، وهذا من المحركات والكنوز والوعيان بتحركه وتكينه وقدرته ، سبحانه وسبقه عنه شيء . ثم تزيد مراقبة الى أن تترقى الى عين اليقين ثم تفيض عن ذلك به . وذلك حقيقة اليقين فتقول : ما رأيت شيئاً إلا في الله سبحانه وتعالى ، وهذا القديم على كل شيء ، بقيومته ذلك الشيء . وهذا القائم بأمره وبقدرته على حبا إلى عبادة والحا ضرورة »

L.cit. P. 97.

Again, in Ihiya' (I, P. 30) defining Tawhid as the repudiating of belief in secondary causes, Al-Ghazali writes:

« دمان التوحيد عندهم (يعني : أهل التصوف) عبارة عن أمر آخر لم ينهجه أكثر المتكلمين . دمان فهموه لم يتفهموا به . وهذا أن يرى الأمر كله من الله عز وجل ، رتبة تقطع التفاته عن الأسباب والوسائل ، فلا يفرس الأمر والشئ من غير منه جل جلاله . فهذا مقام شريف أحد ثمراته التوكل . . . والباب فيه أن يرى الأمر كله من الله تعالى رتبة تقطع التفاته عن الوسائل ، وأن يعبد عبادة يفرد بها فلا يعبد سواه . »

(31) On Al-Ash'ari's own teaching on 'divine attributes', cf. Ibanah, PP.54 ff.

For an account of Orthodox Ash'arite teaching in general on this question: cf. Baghdadi - Usul ud-Din, PP.88-93.

Also: Ash-Shahrastani, - Nihayat al-Iqdam. PP.180 ff.

In Milal, Ash-Shahrastani relates that Al-Ash'ari was categorical over the reality of God's attributes as subsisting in ^{he}his Being (صفات قائمة بالذات). As to the mode of this subsistence, positively leaned towards an agnostic view according to Shahrastani:

(L.cit. P.67, also (P.65 where the doctrine of (bila kaifa (no queries) is underlined.

(32) cf. Q.VI of Tahafut (PP.163 - 172), where Al-Ghazali engages in a polemic against the philosophers and the mu'tazilites over their doctrine of identity of essence and attributes in God. also. PP.149-162. On his opting for an agnostic view, cf. PP.180-1

(33) The 'Book of the Fundamentals of Belief' - in Vol.I of Ihiya'. cf. P.79

(34) Al-Ghazali goes on, developing the same theme, in an eloquent manner:

"دأى له عالم بجميع المعلومات، محيط بما يجري من تحوّل في الوجود من أعلى السموات ... وأنه تعالى حريص على ثباته، مدبر للمعادنات، فلا يجري في الملكوت تبدل أو كثير، صمد أو كبير، خلد أو شدة، نفع أو ضرر، إيمان أو كفر، عرفان أو نكر، فوز أو خسران، زيادة أو نقصان، طاعة أو عصيان، إله أو تنفاهة وقدرة وحكمة وشيئة

فما تـ ، فان و ما لم يـ لم يكن ، و يخرج عن مشيئة لفته فانه و
 ظلة خا طه ، بل صدر المبدئ المبدء الفاعل لما يريد ، و راد برزوه
 و صعب لقضائه و صعب لعبد من مصلته ، و لا يتوقف
 درحمته و لا قدرة على طاعته ، و لا بمشيئته و ارادته ، فلو اجتمع
 الانس و الجن و الملائكة و الشياطين على ان يحركوا في العالم ذرة او
 يگندھا دون ارادته او مشيئته لعجزوا عن ذلك ، و ان ارادته قائمة
 بذاته في جملة صفاته لم يزل كذلك موصوفاً بجزء مريد في ازاله لوجود
 الاشياء في اوقات التي قدرها فوجدت في اوقات كما ارادها
 في ازاله من غير شئ من دوائها ، بل دفعت على وفقه علمه و ارادته من غير تدل
 و تصرف ، و لا تدبر و لا تدب ، و لا تدبر زمان فذلك لم يشغله شئ من شئ .
 (35) 'This is the substance of the 'five contentions' which al-

shazali states dogmatically and emphatically as part of the
 orthodox creed in Iqtisad, (PP.73-9). Here is the text:

* الرد على الاولى : ندعي انه يجوز لله تعالى ان لا يخلق الخلق ، و اذا خلقه فلم
 يكن ذلك واجباً عليه ، و اذا خلقهم فله ان يخلقهم ، و اذا خلقهم فلم يكن
 ذلك واجباً عليه ...

الرد على الثالثة : ندعي ان الله قادر على ابدن الحيوان البرئ عن اجنات ، و لا
 يلزم عليه شئ . و قالت المعتزلة : ان ذلك محال فجميع ... فان زعم انهم
 ان رفع الحشر للشاب عن الله يناقض كونه حكيماً) - نقول : لو ان الحكمة بان
 اريد بها العلم بنظام الوجود و القدرة على ترتيبه - كما سبق - فليس في
 هذا ما يناقضه . و بان اريد بها امر آخر فليس يجب له عندنا من الحكمة ، و لا
 ما ذكرناه ... فان قيل فنوردنا ان يكون ظاهراً ، و قد قال : و ما بين
 نظام للعبيد . قلنا انظم منفي عنه لحرمة السلب المحض ... فان انظم
 انما يتصور من يمكن ان يصادف فعله مثل غيره و لا يتصور من
 في حقه الله ، و يمكن ان يكون عليه امر فيخالف فعله امر غيره ... فمن
 لا يتصور منه ان يتصرف في مثل غيره و لا يتصور منه ان يكون
 تحت امر غيره فان انظم مبدئاً عنه ...

« الدعوى الرابعة : ندعي انه لا يجب عليه رعاية اهل بيته ، بل له ان
 ينفق ما يشاء ويحكم كما يريد خلافاً للمقدلة . فانهم يحرموا على الله في
 اخذ ما زاد حيزاً عليه رعاية اهل بيته ... الدعوى الخامسة : ندعي ان الله
 تعالى اذا كلف العباد فالطاعة لم يجب عليه الثواب بل ان شاء اثناهم
 وان شاء عاقبهم وان شاء اعد لهم ولم يحشرهم وروى في لو غفر
 لجميع الكافرين وعاقب جميع المؤمنين . والله عز وجل عن طاعة العباد عساه .
 فذلكم النبي قد احذره الله تعالى بان اطاعة شقاؤه والمقصية داؤه . وان ايمان معه
 والله عز وجل . » | (36) Iqtisad, P.84, cf. supra, Note 35, etc.

(37) Ibid. - P.83.

(38) Ibid.

(39) Met.Bk XII, 7, P.1072b.

(40) Ethics, Bk. X, 7, P.1177b.

(41) Iqtisad, P.83. « نقول ان الحكمة لو ان اراد بها العلم بخلقهم
 الامور والقدرة على ترتيبها - كما سببه - فليس في ذلك ما يشاققه ؟
 (sh. God's arbitrary fiat)

(42) Al-Ghazali is very critical of the peripatetic conception
 of God as 'thought thinking itself' (intellectus intelligans
 intellectum). (expounded Tahafut, PP.154-5, and 173-4), because
 it entails a limitation of God's knowledge to the sphere of selfhood.
 scoffing at this thesis he writes:

ثم ينزه آخر نظره ان ان
 رب الارباب ومعبود الاسباب لا علم له اصلاً بما يجري في العالم . واما فرق
 بينه وبين الميت بالاراد في علمه بنفسه ؟ واما كمال في علمه بنفسه مع
 جهله بغيره " P.182

The same difficulty of specifying the notion of divine life
 is encountered by Baghdadī in his attempts to state the Orthodox
 doctrine on this question:

« اجمع اصل الحق : ان حياته صفة أزلية قائمة من غير روح ولا عذاء
دوتنفس »

that he does not in this manner succeed in proceeding beyond
'negative concepts' is shown by this conditional proposition:

« اذا صح لنا ان الصانع عالم قادر مريد دائمة شرط في هذه الصفات
عندنا ، صح لنا ان نستدل على كونه حياً »
Us'ail ud-Din, 765
whereby life is reduced to an 'inferential notion'.

(43) The theme of God's all-circumscribing knowledge recurs
very frequently in Al-Ghazali's works:

cf., for instance, Ihiya', vol. I, P. 79.

(44) Depending on whether the existence of the said 'extrinsic
agency' is admitted or not.

(45) In Tahafut, P. 377, Al-Ghazali brings out the agreement
of the Peripatetics and the mu'tazilites on the question of causal

efficacy: « فذهبوا (اي الفلاسفة) قريب من مذاهب المعتزلة ، ومنهم من
في تلوهم ان سبب الطبيعة هو الذي يشرح المعتزلة به في القول ».

As-shahrastani (Milan, P. 52.) finds the same identity between
the teaching of the Jahizites (Mu'tazilites) and the philosophers.

he writes: « وزاد عن ذلك (اي الجاحظ) باثبات الطباع بروحهم كما
فالت الطبيعة من الفلاسفة واثبت انما في مخصوصة به ».

On the mutazilite doctrine of lawallud (generation and its
origins) cf. infra, ch. II, PP. 93 ff.

(46) « اثبت عدة تدل على الحصول عنده ويثبت على الحصول
به دانه لا علة سواه ».
Tahafut, P. 279

(47) it is well-known that this is the problem which pre-occupied
Hume and Kant and which led Kant to enquire into the grounds

of the possibility of 'synthetic judgments a priori' in the First Critique. Al-Ghazali writes on the contingency of empirical judgments:

"دعا عرف بالاعتقاد بطلانه وذكر في المنطق ان يحكم به
جزئي او جزئيات كثيرة على كلي"

Tahafut. P. 318

his inductive procedure (استقراء الكوثرى), he adds, cannot "furnish us with reliable certainty, but only mere conjecture." P. 319

(48) This is the text of this difficulty rendered passage:

"فمن اين يأمن الخلق ان يكون في جوارح الوجود علل واسباب ينفصل منها
هذه الحوادث عند حصول مادة بسببها بالاولا ثابتة ليست تقدم
درهم احكام متحركة فتفقد. ولو انفصلت او غابت لا ركن
الفرقة وفسادها ان غم سببا وراء ما شاهدناه." Ibid. P. 280

(49) the dator formarum (ar.wahibus - suwār), is the separate intelligence, which in the Neo-Platonic scheme confers 'forms' on material things. The doctrine is attributed to Avicenna and was well-known to the scholastics.

(50) Infra.Ch.II, sect. IV

(51) Supra, P 26 ff.

(52) Mishkat, P. 120

(53) Tahafut, PP. 281-283

(54) Creative Determinism is rejected by Thomas Aquinas (3.Theol.
Ia, Q.19, arts. 2&3, s.cont.Gent. Bk.II, chs. 2, 23, 24; De Potentia
De pot.
Bk.I, chs. 80-83, Q.III, art. 15-, on grounds not unlike those on
which Al-Ghazali rejects it. It is significant, however, (and
this is the issue which ultimately divides the Thomist and

Ghazalian metaphysics) that Aquinas reserves a mode of determinism to the creative act of God, in the name of divine wisdom and love; and this is God's necessary volition of His goodness - in and through which things are created.

(55) Tahafut, PP.96-7

(56) «انما عمل عبارة عن مصدر عنه الفعل مع اسراراة للفعل على
سبيل الاختيار ومع العلم بالمراد»
Ibid.P.96. cf. also PP.100-3

(57) Ibid.P.102.

(58) Ibid.P.103

(59) The emanationist neo-Platonic scheme is rejected by Al-Ghazali on the following grounds:

1. Its failure to account for multiplicity and composition in the universe.

2. Its admission of plurality in the First Intelligence can legitimately be applied to the One, thus vitiating its monistic presuppositions.

3. Emanationism cannot bridge the gap between the one and the ^{many} multiple; hence it is imperative to assume ~~that~~ a free agent who creates whatever he wishes -, a doctrine taught by revelation and incapable of rational demonstration.

cf. Tahafut, PP.110-132.

(60) Ibid. P.131

(61) Ibid.P.132. The relevance of this citation from hadith, which recurs in the discussion of God's attributes (Tahafut P.180)

in the same agnostic context, is to repudiate the demonstrability of the mode of Creation and the manner in which the Divine Being chooses to unfold his will.

(62) Al-Ghazali writes in developing this objection to his thesis:

« فان قيل، فهذا يجر الى ارتكاب محالات شنيعة، فانه اذا انكرت لزوم الحسبات عن اشياءها واضيف الى ارادة مختزعة ولم يكن للارادة ارضا منزهة فمحصورها متعين بل امكن تفننه وتنوعه، فليجوز لكل واحد منا ان يكذب بين يديه سباع ضارية ويزن مثقلة وجبال راسية وطلاء مشقة بالسلحة وهدى يراها ثلث الله تعالى ليس يخلقه لردية له. ومن وضع كتابا في بيته فليجوز ان يكون قد انقلب عند رجوعه الى بيته غلاما امرد عاقلا متفردا... واذا سئل عن شيء من هذا فليبين ان يقول لا ادرى ما في البيت اشد، وانما القدر الذي تعلمه انما تركت في البيت كتابا ولعله اشد فرس... فان الله قادر على كل شيء ليس من ضرورة ان يخلقه من النطنة... بل ليس من ضرورة ان يخلقه من شيء. فليقله خلقه اشياء لم يكن لا وجود من قبل. »
Tahom, 283.

(63) Igtisad, p.39. - Al-Ghazali writes:

« ولنا نفي بالضرورة بالاحصنة فليذكر احصاء. ومن حكمه ان متعلقة بجميع المقدمات واعني بالمقدمات المحللات لكل التي من نهاية لا ولا يخفى ان المحللات لا نهاية لا خلافا لنهاية ان للمقدمات »

(64)

« بان الحال غير مقدور عليه... وما ليس بحال فهو مقدور. والحال اثبات الشيء مع نفيه او اثبات استثنائهم مع نفيهم او اثبات استثنائهم مع نفي الواحد، وما لا يرجع الى هذا فليس بحال. »
Tahom, p.293.

The Thomist teaching on this question is identical with al-Ghazali's,

cf. S.Theol. La. Q.25. art.4.

S.C.Gent. Bk.I.Ch.84

B
Bk.II ch.25.

De Potentia. QI, arts., III, IV.

(65) Tahafut, PP.292-6. cf. supra P. 22 ff.

For the conflicting theories of the mutakallims on this question.
cf. infra PP. 38 ff.

(66) cf. Tahafut. P.285. This, as I can construe it, is the import of the following obscure passage:

"والجواب أن نقول إن ثبت أن الممكن كونه موجوداً في خلقه لا أن
علم عدم كونه لزم هذه الحجة لاوت. ونحن نشك في هذه الصورة
التي ادّعى أنها. فإن الله خلقه لنا علماً بأن هذه الممكنات لم يخلقها.
ولم ننزع أن هذه الصورة راجعة إلى ممكنة يجوز أن تقع ويجوز
أن لا تقع. واستمرار العادة في مرة بعد أخرى يرسخ في أذهاننا خبراً
على أنه العادة الماضية ترسخ في أذهاننا عنه."

(67) The instance which al-Ghazali here cites is the instance of the uninstructed (العامي) whose intuitive faculty might become so acute that he is able to partake of the 'prophetic sense' and the faculty of prognostication. Alluding to the Philosophers' admission of such a possibility, he argues that God might bring about that this should come to pass. The Philosophers' proviso that such has not actually occurred does not invalidate this claim since its logical possibility has been conceded. - cf. Tahafut. P.286.

It should be noted here that al-Ghazali's theory of a contemporaneous creation of the event and the judgment about the event in human consciousness proves that his occasionalism is not limited to the natural, but extends also to the epistemological spheres. Note al-Ghazali's own phrases: "خلق العلم ضمناً" - Ib. P.285
"إن الله خلقه لنا علماً"

(68) The reference is to Abraham, who, according to Koranic tradition, was cast into the fire but came out uninjured.

(69) The instance which Al-Ghazali cites in illustrating the point is that of the metamorphosis of the animal through the following phases:

Earth gives rise to vegetation; vegetation, upon consumption by the animal, to blood; blood to semen; semen to the animal. "The normal process takes place throughout a given lapse of time," he writes, "The opponent cannot uphold the claim that it is impossible for God to transmute matter through these phases in a shorter lapse of time....Once it is conceded that a shorter duration is possible, there is no assignable limit to the shortest -, so that these faculties (sc. of the natural elements) are speeded up in their operation and thus the miracle comes to pass." Tahafut, P.288.

(70) cf. Tahafut, PP.274-5, and supra P.17.

(71) Tahafut, P.290. The 'primary causes' are the intelligences or the angels, of which the 'dator formarum' is here in question.

(72) Al-Ghazali cites here the example of sorcerers who have succeeded "in combining the heavenly powers with the mineral properties" in such wise as to dispel snakes, scorpions and bugs from whole towns. - Ibid. P.291

(73) Ibid. P.291

(74) "ما انفك هذا بالارض المحصلة" وادنى بالمرجودات
العالية والارض عن اشرار الله سبحانه في خلقه الخلق. Ibid. P.291

Chapter Two.

(1) cf. Munqidh, PP. 80ff.

(2) *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, "من مات وهو يعلم ان لا اله الا الله دخل الجنة" -
vol. I, P. 217 - Azhar, 1323

(3) Schmolders - Essai, P.190

(4) cf. De Boer - Hist. of Phil. in Islam, PP.44-46

In the prologue to Milal, Shahrastani (an Ash'arite) relates that the 'first controversy' (شبهة) to arise in Creation was that of Satan (Iblis) and his rebellion against God's authority.

« قال يكافل عنه، اني سمعت ان ابليس تعالى قال له انخلد، عالم قار وروى عن
عنه قدرته ومشيئته، فانه معها اوار شيئاً قال له: لكن فيكون، وهو حكيم
واسانه يتوجه على ما به حكمته اسئلة - »

then follow the 'seven queries' directed to God over the "wisdom in creating him (sc. Iblis) in order to sin as foreknown by God"

- L.cit. PP.5-7

From this Shahrastani goes on to argue that "the insistence of the advocates of free-will (the Qadarites) on asking for the reason ('Illah) for everything is an insinuation of the devil, (اللعين) who asked for the reason for creation and the prudence of obligation

(الحكمة في التكليف) and the benefit of prostrating himself to Adam". Ibid.8-9

this is how Shahrastani further on contrasts the orthodox with the

Mu'tazilite doctrine on righteousness ('Adl) :

« قال اصل العدل ان الله تعالى واحد في ذاته لا شريك له، وواحد في افعاله لا شريك له، فلو قديم غير ذاته ومقتسم له في افعاله، ووجد وجوده عين وجوده بين قادرين، وعلى من ذهب اصل السنة ان الله تعالى عدل في افعاله نعمته انه يقتصر في ملكه ومملكته شئ من ما شاء وعلمه حارم، والعدل وضع الشئ موضعاً وصعد القوت في العدل على مقتضى المشيئة والسلام، والظلم ضد ذلك فهو ضد منه هو في العلم والظلم في القوت، وعلى من ذهب اصل العدل ان الله تعالى عدل في افعاله من الحكمة، وهو اصل العدل على وجه الصواب والحكمة، Ibid. pp.28-30

(5) supra, P.33

(6) Nihayatul-Iqdam fi 'Ilm il-Kalam, P.370

(7) The same teaching is expounded by Baghdadi - Usul ud-Din, PP.24 ff, 202-5

Juwayni, Irshad, PP.138-154.

(8) Nihayat, PP.372-4

(9) Ibid, P.373 and 379

(10) cf. Shahrastani - Milal, P.31

"وانتقدوا (اي المعتزلة) على ان اصول المعرفة وشك النعمة واجب قبل ورود
السمع. واكمن والقيح بحسب معرفتنا بالعقل واعتنايه الحسن واجتناب القبيح
واجب كذلك. ووردوا انكافى الطرف بباري تعالى أرسل الى العباد بشرط
الانبياء ... امتحاناً واختباراً"

On the teaching of the Hudhalite sect (MU'tazilite) regarding the possibility of rational knowledge of God and the moral law, through demonstration and prior to revelation, cf. Ibid. P.36; cf.P.55 for the Juha'ite and Bahshamiyyah sects.

(11) Shahrastani - Nihayat, PP.374-5

(12) Ibid. P.375

(13) Ibid. P.375 - 7

(14) Shahrastani relates that it is part of Ash'ari's teaching that "obligation rests on authority. Reason enjoins nothing as binding; i.e.: as reprehensible or commendable ... not even the very notion of obligation"- Milal. PP.73-4
Baghdadi writes on the same Ash'arite teaching.

«اما وجوب انضمان وحظرها وتحمير على العباد خبرين لا يردان في الشرع»

Usul ud-Din, P.24. cf. also PP.202-5

That punishment and reward are coeval with the predication of the law according to Ash'ari, Malik, Shafi'i, Ibn-Hanbal and Ahluz-Zahin, etc. cf. ibid. P.25 and PP.202-3.

That on these premisses, God could have enjoined what he has prohibited or vice versa. cf. ibid. PP.213 ff.

« فان اصحابنا وجاهلنا من الله تعالى ان يأمر بكل ما ورد امره به ولو لم يكن
عما امر به جاز وكذا لو لم يأمر بما نهى عنه جاز »
ibid. P.213.

On the same Ash'arite teaching on the justification of obedience to the law. cf. Juwayni, Irshad, PP.138 ff.

(15) Supra, P.33

On the same conception of righteousness as conformity to the command of a superior, cf. Ash'ari, Ibanah 'an Usul id-Diyanah, P.65.

On the illegitimacy of attributing 'vanity' (Safah) to God, in whatever He pleases to do, ff. ibid.

On impredicability of injustice to God, according to Ash'ari's teaching, cf. Shahrastani, - milal, P.73

It must be noted in this context that al-Ash'ari and the Ash'arite school, in general, adduce a third argument in support of the impredicability of injustice and evil to God-, the argument namely that the cause of injustice and evil needs not be unjust or evil himself, as the 'cause of conception is not said to be pregnant himself'. - cf. Ash'ari-Maqalatul - Islamiyya, P.554 (the reference is actually to Mu'ammār (a Qadarite). cf. also -Shahrastani, Nihayat, P.251.

It will be shown later that this teaching violates the principle of analogy, in regard to the concept of cause and that of attributes generally, as predicated of the creator and the creature. It also militates against the attempt to qualify the creator in any way -, a task which, as we have seen, is fundamental to Ash'arite teaching regarding divine attributes.

(16) cf. Ibanah, PP. 60-2; Milal, P.72

Ash'ari writes in Maqalat, P.552:

«دانا أقول: إن كل ما وصف بالتقديرية على أن تخلقه كسأله له، فهو قادر
أن يظفرهم إليه، وجائز أن يظفرهم الله سبحانه أي الجور».

compare Al-Ghazali's definition of *qudrah* (power) in *Iqtisad*, P.39, with the Ash'arite conception.

(17) 'Kun' - fiat.

(18) Ibanah, P.9

(19) On will - cf. Ibanah, PP.60 ff.

on predestination, PP.67-8

on capacity (*Istita'ah*) P.69.

(20) Shahrastani sums up Ash'ari's teaching on obligation in the following way:

a. All obligation rests upon the explicit enunciation of revelation (*sam'*)

b. The validity of obligation, as such, is not necessary, with respect to God.

c. God's decree either to reward or chastise the creature is

fully legitimate. For "He is not answerable about his deeds but thou art" - Koran 2:23.

cf. Milal, PP.73-4

(21) supra PP.69-71

The former is the teaching of the Mu'tazilah, the latter that of the Philosophers.

(22) Nihayat, P.381

(23) Ibid. PP.381-4

and PP. 397-9

(24) Nihayat, P.401

The Mu'tazilah adduced another reason for creation and obligation, namely: the "enjoyment of the bliss of rewarding the pious" by God - P.403

(25) Ibid. Pp.401 -404.

cf. also - Baghdadi - Usul ud-Din, P.150

(26) Op. cit. PP.140 -5

(27) Ibid. P.150

In the same context Al-Baghdadi sets himself in opposition to the Qadarites and the Karramites - the former because 'they contended that God was bound necessarily to create the animate and the inanimate, the godly and the ungodly', the latter because they 'enjoin that God's first creature should be a living being.'

As a pernicious thesis, he also cites the mu'tazilite view

that God was 'bound to create (the creatures) that they might worship and thank Him'.

The issue as to whether a reason can be assigned to God's acts was discussed in Ash'arite-Mu'tazilite circles under this problem: 'whether God must needs have regard to the fittest' in effecting his providential designs - Shahrastani devotes a whole chapter (ch.181 of Nihayat al-Iqdam) to this question: "فإن الله تعالى وإلهنا بالصلح والصلح والصلح" . Juwayni rebuts the contentions of the Mu'tazilah along similar lines in a section entitled (القول في الصلح والصلح) Irshad, PP.165 - 174. Note the persistent appeal to the gratuitous and arbitrary character of God's acts.

(28) cf. Ibid. P. 24 ff, and PP.31-2. Baghdadī sums up the teaching of the orthodox (Ash'arites) on this question in this way:

"قال أصحابنا: ... فاما وجوب الإضمار وحظره على العباد فلا يعرف
إلا من طريق الشرع، فان أوجب الله عز وجل على عباده شيئا بخطابه أيا هم بد
والله أديبهم ورسولهم وجب. وكذا ان نزلهم عن شيء بد والله أديبهم
بارسال رسولهم وجب. وكذا ان نزلهم عن شيء بد والله أديبهم
لأن رسولهم حرم عليهم. وقيل الخ لا بد من الإضمار في الشرع واجبا
حراما على أحد. وكذا عاقل فعل فلا بد من الإضمار في الشرع لا يتحد به عاقل
ثوابا ولا عقابا. ... دوجه هذا القول ان الثواب انما يكون على الطاعة
والطاعة موافقة الأمر والعقاب انما يكون على المعصية، والمعصية موافقة
النهي ومخالفة الأمر." P.25

(29) On the Ash'arite teaching on this point:

cf. Juwayni, Irshad, PP. 160 - 5. Note Juwayni's polemic against the Mu'tazilah over the 'remuneration' of the innocent for the suffering they undergo in this life.

(30) supra p. 32 ff.

(31) cf. PP. 24-25 and PP. 240 - 1.

The account of punishment and reward as consequent on the predication of the law is attributed by Baghdadī to Al-Ash'arī, Malik, ash-Shafi'ī, Al-Awza'ī, Ibn Hanbal, and the collective sect of Ahluz-Zahir, etc. Ibid.P.25.

(32) Man, they said, is: Khalīqu af'alihi cf. Shahrastānī, Milāl P.30.

cf. also, Ash'arī - Ibanah, P.6. - when Ash'arī calls the mu'tazilāh 'the Manichees' of Islam (Majus), because they affirm 'two creators' - a theme which recurs in Ash'arite writers. cf. too, Ibid. PP.73 ff.

(33) Ibanah, P.9

(34) cf. Juwaynī, Irshad, PP.106 ff.

(35) Ihiya', IV, P. 5 and 6

(36) Milāl, P.60.

Shahrastānī's definition of Jabriyyah as 'the impredicability of real activity of the creature and its attribution to God' - brings out the extremist character of this school. Ibid.P.59

Jahm b. Safwan is reported by Shahrastānī to have taught

1. that human predicates do not apply to God, nor divine predicates to man.
2. that capacity (القدرة) and activity are impredicable of man except figuratively -, as they are of things and elements.
3. that obligation (Takleef), reward and punishment are compulsory (Jabr). - Ibid. PP.60 -61.

on same school of. Ash'ari - maqalat, PP. 379 - 80

(37) In his argument with the qadarites, Shahrastani brings this distinction between reference (Ta'alluq) to the agent and efficacy (Ta'thir) as the issue of the controversy. Speaking in the mouth of his critics, he writes:

"ومن العجب انكم تذكرون تاثير القدرة كحادثة وتشتون التعليل
 فان خضعت التعليل مع نفي التاثير لندرك سببها فانما يخصها التعليل
 مع اثبات التاثير"

Nihayat, P.72.

(38) Shahrastani - Nihayat, PP. 72-6

Shahrastani himself speaks approvingly of this thesis of Al-Baqilani which he seeks to reconcile with the thesis of the Ash'ari "Who did not concede any efficacy to the human faculty at all: either with respect to being per se or to any of the attributes of being" Ibid.P.72. For Baqilani's theory cf. also Milal P.69.

(39) Khalq (creation) is defined as the "production of the effect by its author", Kasb, as the "reference of the contingent agent (Qudrah hadithah) to a possible (maqdur)". The former has for its principle the postulate that the author is not affected by the production, "and as its condition that "the author is conscious of it in all its aspects." The principle of the latter is that the two referents (the acquirer and the acquired) are mutually affected, so as to derive a quality (sifat), one from the other; its condition is that the agent is conscious of certain aspects of the act, ^{only} Ibid.P.77.

(40) Ibid. P.77.

(41) Ibid. pp. 79-80. This is how Shahrastani reports this important argument of the Mu'tazilah:

« قَالُوا: إِنْ كَانَ يَكُونُ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ وَقَوَى الْفِعْلَ عَلَى حَسْبِ الدَّوْعَى وَالضَّرْفِ،
فَإِذَا أَرَادَ الْحَرَكَةَ تَحَرَّكَ، وَإِذَا أَرَادَ السَّكْنَ سَكَنَ، وَمِنْ أَمْرِ ذَلِكَ
مَجْدُ الْفَرْدَانَةِ. فَلَوْ صِلَاحِيَّةُ الْقُدْرَةِ الْوَاحِدَةِ سَيَجَادُ مَا أَرَادَ
أَحَدٌ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ ذَلِكَ... » P. 73.

(42) « الْعَمَلُ الْإِنشَائِي لَمْ (أَبَى الْعَقْدَةَ) فِي اثْبَاتِ الْفِعْلِ لِلْعَبْدِ بِإِحَادٍ،
قَدْ لَمْ التَّكْلِيفُ مَتَوَجِّهٌ عَلَى الْعَبْدِ بِأَفْعَلٍ وَفِعْلٍ. فَلَمْ يَحُلْ أَحَدٌ مِنْ
أَحَدِ أَمْرَيْنِ: أَمَّا أَنْ يَرْيَحِقَهُ مِنَ الْعَبْدِ فَعَلٌ أَصْلُهُ، فَيَكُونُ التَّكْلِيفُ
سَفَرًا مِنَ الْعَمَلِ. وَمَعَ كَوْنِهِ سَفَرًا يَكُونُ مَتَنَاوِضًا. فَانْتِدِيرُهُ
أَفْعَلٌ يَأْتِي بِرَيْفَةٍ. وَإِضًا فَإِنَّ التَّكْلِيفَ لِحُبِّ وَالْحَلْبِ يَسْتَعِينُ
Ibid. P. 83. مَلْدُوبًا مِمَّا يَكُونُ مِنَ الْمَلْدُوبِ مِنْهُ. وَإِذَا لَمْ يَتَصَدَّرْ مِنْهُ فَعَلٌ
يُطْرَقُ الْحَلْبُ -

(43) cf. Supra - P. 70, Note 42

A striking instance of the Mu'tazilite preception of the problem of consciousness of self-determination is shown in the curious theory which some Mu'tazilite authors upheld, with a view to safeguarding the reality of moral autonomy, in the face of the Ash'arite charge that human activity is conditioned by physical limitations over which human power has no sway. These authors are reported to have taught that the real man was his own spirit (رُوحُهُ) only - since this, obviously, is the domain where his autonomy can be best ascertained. This theory is attributed by Ash'ari to Hisham b. al-Hakam, Mu'ammār and An-Najjar - Maqalat, P. 331.

It is noteworthy that al-Ash'ari discusses this theory under the question: 'What is man' - which seems to have been an issue fraught with controversies among the Muslim ethicists.

(44) cf. Ihiya, IV, P. 221.

"فإن قلت: فكيف الجمع بين التوحيد والشرح، ومعنى التوحيد أن لا فاعل إلا الله ومعنى الشرح إثبات أفعال للمبارك؟"

(45) On this distinction, c.f. Iqtisad, P. 98 & P. 39.

"وكيف يكون جذاً محضاً وخصاً بالضرورة يدرك التفرقة بين الحركة المقدورة والعدة الضرورية؟" P. 98.

Tahafut, P. 292 - in the course of discussing the absurd consequences of the arbitrary power of God, in the mouth of the opponent.

(46) cf. Supra, P. 69, note 39.

(47) Al-Ghazali even goes the length of contending that power is impredicable of the creature, because of this unawareness, on his part, of the minutes and numbers of the movements it is said to effect in nature. (cf. Iqtisad, PP. 43 & 98).

(48) (Sc. determinism and creation of deeds) واذن الطوفان، فلم يبعه

إلا اعتقاد في الاعتقاد وصدان (Sc. Motion) مقدرة بتدرة الله

تعالى اختراعاً بتدرة العبد على وجه آخر - Iqtisad, P. 98. من التعلل بعد عنه بالوكف ب

On P. 43 & P. 39, Al-Ghazali calls this 'Media via':

"القول بمقدور بين قادرين."

(49) Ihiya', IV, P.5.

(50) 'This first 'movement of deliberation' - as the mediaevals called it -, Al-Ghazali relates to the good (Khayr); inasmuch as it culminates in decision or choice (Ikhtiyar) . cf. Ihiya', IV, P.219

(51) Ibid. P.220

«إن داعية الإرادة مسخرة بحكم العقل (دائما) والقدرة مسخرة
للداعية والحركة مسخرة للقدرة ولكن مقدر بالضرورة؟»

(52) «الآن» (sc. this process described here) عقدر بالضرورة من حيث

ويدير. فاما احد محل (suppositum) ومجرى (channel) لهذه الامور

Ibid. P.220. cf. also P.221. فاما ان يحدث منه فكل واحد

(53) Ihiya', IV, P.219

h. calls them three acts: ضد طبيعى وادارى واختياري

respectively. I have adopted the technical biological term for respiratory movement, sc. autonomous.

(54) فالحركة لازمة ضرورية بالقدرة، والقدرة متحركة ضرورية عند

Ibid. P.219 - انجذاب الإرادة والعشيرة تحدث ضرورة في القلب

Al-Ghazali, without doubt, means nothing but the 'intellect' by what he calls here the 'heart' - a term recurring frequently in his mystical writings.

(55) Al-Ghazali here writes in the mouth of the opponent:

«فان قلت : ما ذكرته من ان الله قد اظهر صراحته ان الله تعالى لا يورث
مخبرات . ومما ذكرته من ان الله تعالى لا يورث . فانه يتحرك بان
ث . ويكن ان ث . فكيف يحدث مسخرة ؟ فاعلم : انه لو كان
مع هذا ث . بان اراد ان ث . وورث . بان لم ير ان ث . وكان
هذا منزهة القدم وموقع الفلظ . وتبين اعلم انه يفعل ما يشاء وادار

ثاء، ان يثام لم يثا. فليت المشقة اليه. اذ لا كانت اليه لا فتمت
 الى مشقة اخرى وتلك الامراى غير لاية " -
 Ibid. PP.218-9

This acute formulation of the dilemma of indetermination recalls Kant's dialectical analysis of the problem of a 'free causality' - as the principle of the spontaneous origination of conditions in the subject without which the series of conditions is inexplicable - cf. III ⁿAntinomy of the 'Dialectic of Pure Reason' - c. Antithesis of Pure Reason.

(56) This extension of God's power to the utmost limits of possibility we hold, is Ghazali's manner of closing the cycle of determinism which otherwise would involve an infinite regress, as stated above. Ghazali writes in Iqtisad on the universal reference of all movement to God, as its first term:

"ان كل حادث في العالم فهو فعله وخالقه وخالقه سواه ولا يحدث
 باسواه ... فجميع احوال عباده مخلوقة له ومعلقة بقدرته. وكيف لا يكون
 خالقاً لكل العبد، قدرته تامة لا قصور فيها وهي معلقة بحركة
 ايد ان العباد، والحوادث متيثة وتعلقه القدرة على الذات. فما الذي ينظر
 تفقداً عن بعض الحركات دون البعض مع تماثلها؟" 1.c.P.98

The affirmation of the 'generic identity' of all species of movement is of course gratuitous; since it is this precisely which is in question.

(57) cf. Iqtisad, P.44. "فان قيل (الشيء بين المقدور والمقدرة
 نسبة السبب الى السبب دور كونه به، فان لم يكن به لم تكن علته فلم يكن
 قدرته ... فلنا هي معلقة، وقد كنتم ان الشئ مقدور على الوقوع به

... (as anticipatory of occurrence) يلحق بتعلقه الإرادة والعلم

وكما يحل قدرة موجودة معلقة بالمقدور والمقدور غير واقع به،
 يحل عندنا أيضاً قدرة كذا من المقدور غير واقع به ولكنه واقع
 بقدرة الله تعالى "

« فان قيل فقدره لا يقع في مقدور العجز عناية واحدة قلنا :
 (58) ان عنيتم به ان الحالة التي يدركها الانسان عند وجودها مثل ما يدرك عند
 العجز في الرعدة فهو متاخر في القدرة . فان عنيتم ان عناية العجز في ان
 المقدور لم يقع في وجوده ، ولكن تحسبه عجزاً خفياً »
 Igtisad, P. 45.

(59) Ibid. P.49

(60) ^{al} Ockhamist Nominism culminated in a
 similar occasionalist metaphysics, for exactly the same reasons.
 cf. *Gilson, Phil. an. Moyen, Age*, pp. 656 ff.
 the occasionalism of Malebranche, bound up as it is with Cartesian
 dualism, is different in inspiration. Greek atomism, from which
 the Ash'arite doctrine of atoms is derived, belongs clearly to
 an altogether different order of discourse. There is in it, in the
 first place, no preponderent role, if any, of the Deity. In the
 second place, both with the Epicurians and the Stoics, it forms the
 basis of a deterministic metaphysics.

(61) cf. Schmolders - *Essai sur les écoles philosophiques chez les Arabes* - PP.135-6 and pp.144 ff.

Schmolders points out that Maimonides's avowed bias against the
 mutakallims, in favour of Averroism and Peripatetism, vitiates the
 objectivity of his account. The only plausible charge he levels on
 him is the allegation of universal scepticism against the *Mutakallims*.
 This allegation, as we shall see later, is not altogether unfounded.

(62) *Guide of the Perplexed*, pt.1, ch. 73.

There exists a complete and authoritative translation in French of
 the *Guide* (or *More Nebuchim*), embodying the original Arabic; fully
 annotated by S. Munk, Paris, 1856, 1861, 1866. The English

translation of M. Friedlander, (London 1919, second ed.), does not embody the Arabic text, but has the merit of sober rendering.

(63) cf. Ash'ari-Maqalat, PP. 321-2

«دكتور (أكثر أصل الكلام) : إن الجسم قد يكون بغيره وأكثره متحرك . وإن
للنفس في حال سيره وقفات خفية ، وفي شدة عذبه مع وضع رجله
در فم . ولهذا فإن أحد الفلاسين الجاهل من صوابه ، وكذلك للمفسر في حال
التخدير . وقفات خفية برهان الجاهل من أحمق آخذ أثقل منه أرسله .»

(64) Need we remark here that this is the theory which we have called 'conditional relationality'. cf. *Infra*, section V.

(65) For a list of the Accidents according to the Ash'arites: cf. *Baghdadi-usul ud-Din*, PP. 40-47. That life, knowledge, sensation are among these accidents, cf. PP. 42, 44.

(66) Maimonides notes here a significant difference of opinion among the Mutakallims. Some of them, he says, (and they belong to the sect of the Mu'tazilah) hold that some accidents endure for a certain period, others do not. Ash'ari attributes this view to Abul-hudhail. cf. *Maqalat*. P. 358.

(67) On Annihilation, cf. *Infra*, PP. 92 ff.
Also, Ash'ari-Maqalat, PP. 366 - 8, and 360 ff.

(68) *Guide*, I. ch. 73, Prop. 6.

(69) *Guide*, Pt. I. ch. 75, 6th Argument, P. 141

cf. also Maimonides's gibe over the futility of the Mutakallims' arguments for God's unity and incorporeity from the notion of creation

ex nihilo - Ibid. ch.76, 3d.argument. He writes: "The proofs of all these doctrines must be based on the well-known natures of existing things as perceived by the senses and the intellect".P.144 the course followed by the mutakallims"whereby they assume such a form of the universe as could be employed to support a doctrine for which otherwise no proof could be found"(ch.75.Argt.5.P.141) -, far from leading to a valid demonstration, does in fact weaken any arguments which might otherwise be possible.

We must instead follow the saying of Themistius that "the properties of things cannot adapt themselves to our opinions, but our opinions must be adapted to the existing properties." Pt.I, ch.71, P.110

(70) I am following in this rendering Munk's translation which brings out better the false disjuncttion.

cf. Guide des Égarés , tr. Munk, P.348.

(71) Guide,Pt.I, ch.71.P.111.

The import of Maimonides's argument would become fully clear when it is recalled that, like Aquinas, he held that the non-eternity of the world was rationally indemonstrable - Ibid.P.111. and Pt.II, ch.23 P.195 and also.PP.174-92.

(72) Ibid. - I, ch.73 Prop.5 - P.123.

(73) Ibid. Prop. 6.P.125.

On the determined sequence of will, power and motion in Al-Ghazali, cf.supra,P.73f. It is noteworthy that Maimonides, in the analysis of activity in relation to God, cites the instance of the pen and the calligrapher's hand - an instance which as we have seen recurs

frequently in Ash'arite writings and notably in Al-Ghazali -
cf., e.g., Ihiya' IV, P.214; the simile of the ant and the pen, P.214

It is needless to say that this theory is peculiar to the
Ash'arite Mutakallims.

(74) Ibid. Also P.124

(75) Ibid. P.125

(76) Ibid. P.125

(77) Ibid. Prop.10 - P.128

cf. Aquinas's critique of this theory in cont.Gentiles.III, 97.

(78) Ibid. P.128.

On impossibility of substances existing without accidents, cf. infra
P.99+100. (note also) p.130 Note.

On impossibility of interpenetration of atoms, cf. Maqalat, pp. 60+318

On intransmutability of accidents into substances and vice versa

cf. p.100, infra; also : Ash'ari-Maqalat, P.567 and 371

(79) Ibid. Prop.10, note. PP. 130-1

(80) Died in 427 A.H.

(81) Op.cit.- cf. PP.315-7

cf. also, Shahrastani - Milal, P.39 :
 « فان اثبات الجواهر جزء لا يتجزأ
 فيكون عليه محمد بن الحسين غير النظام فانه زعم انه لو كان
 له جزءا واحدا لكان له اكثر من نفسه »

Ash'ari - (Maqalat P.59) - attributes this view to Hisham b.al-Hakam.

Ibid.P.304 and 318, for Mazzam's view too.

(82) Died 324 A.H.

(83) Maqamat, vo.1, PP.59-60
vol.II.PP.301-321

(84) Ibid, P.311,314,315, 317,318.

The position of Abu H^usain as-S^alihi, who identified 'Substance' and 'Body', represents a qualified version of atomism, which does not seem to have been in line with the common teaching- cf.PP.301, and 317 and 310.

On definite distinction between Body and Substance cf.Baghdadi-Usul, P.35, where body is said to be 'composed of atoms (sc.substance) and accidents\.

(85) Abul-Hudhail held a theory which is quite anomalous. The atom, he said, has no dimensions and is divested of all accidents except motion, contact and sparability(Infirmad). Yet God can single it out (yofriduhu) in such a way as to make it visible to us. He conceded,however, that accidents are predicable of the body alone. cf.maqamat, PP.314-5

(86) "دَقَانُ هَذَا مِنَ النَّهْطِ بِأَشْبَاهِ الْجُزْءِ الَّذِي لَا يَجْزَأُ ، غَيْرَ أَنَّهُ
لَمْ يَجْزَ عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَأْسَ أَوْ يَبْسُتَ أَوْ يَرَى " Maq. P. 315

'Jubayan' is the impersonal tense of the intransitive of 'bayana' - which means : to be distinct from.

(87) This theory, Ash'ari reports, was challenged by a sect of Atomists who claimed that "an Atom must have length (perhaps they meant mass) proportionate to itself; otherwise a body would never be long; since the agglomeration of particles devoid of length would never produce (a body) endowed with length". Ibid.318 P.

(88) Usul ud-Din, P.33.

(89) Needless it is to remark that this definition of substance reduces it to mere physical entities, and surrenders the refined notion expounded above.

(90) The complete list of these accidents comprises 30 accidents among which figure the generally accepted qualities and a number of curious attributes like life, knowledge, ignorance, will, speech and belief - which corroborates Maimonedes's account with respect to life, knowledge and sensation , being reckoned among the accidents, cf. ibid .PP.40-45

(91) cf. ibid. PP.35-6

(91') P. 36

(92) Baghdadi - Farq, P. 316 and 317

(93) Baghdadi mentions al'Asamm and the materialists among these.

- P.367

(94) Ibid.P.37. The same argument occurs in Juwayni, Irshad, Pp. 10 - 11.

(95) "والاعراض لا يبيح فيها تركيب ودمجها ولا انتقال من مكان
إلى مكان" Ibid P. 38.

(96) This terminology is not Baghdadi's, although his classification corresponds to it.

(97) This is how Baghdadi reports Al-Ash'ari teaching on this question:

"وذهب شيخنا أبو الحسن الأشعري إلى استحالة تقريب الأجزاء من المخلوقات وإن كانت
والطعوم والروائح. وقال لابد أن يكون في كل جود كون وكون ولهم دراهمة حرارة
وبرودة ورطوبة ويبدو أنه وجيء أو مهندها. وإن وجد في حاليين فهو بدعي وجود
بما فيه في كل حال بعد حال حدوثه."

Ibid. P. 56.

Compare Maimonides's account - Guide, I, Ch. 73. (Prop. 4).

(98) cf. Usul, PP. 46-7. Also, Milal, P. 38-39.

(99) cf. Infra, PP. 127-128.

(100) Averroes points out the contradiction involved in the Ash'arite notion of durability owing to the supervention upon substance of the accident of durability in a similar way, cf. Tahafut, P. 88 & P. 139.

(101) Usul - PP. 50 & 51. cf. also, P. 42.

P. 51. "اختلفوا في بقاء الاعراض في حال اصحابها وانكسرت"

Al-Ghazali, after expounding the Ash'arite & Mu'tazilite teaching on extinction, defends it in terms of God's omnipotence, thus:

"ونقول: بسم تنفرد الله عن بقول: لا يبيح دواءه بمرادة
القادر، فإذا أراد الله وجوده وإذا أراد عدمه، وهذا معنى كونه قادراً على الكمال
وجوده في جملة" - "وإنما يتغير الفعل" -

Tahafut, P. 90.

cf., also, PP. 86-90.

(102) Ibid. PP. 51-52.

(103) Maimonides - Guide, I, Ch. 73, Prop. 1., PP. 120-121.

"These atoms, they believe, are not as was supposed by Epicurus and other Atomists numerically constant; but are created anew whenever it pleases the Creator; their annihilation is therefore not impossible."

That the fate of the atoms is inseparable from the fate of the accidents they support, can be gathered from this passage: "When God desires to deprive a thing of its existence, He, according to some of the Mutekallimim, discontinues the creation of its accidents, and eo ipso the body ceases to exist." Prop. 6, P. 124. That annihilation affects both constituents of the body is thus obvious.

(104) Usul - P. 56.

"وقال (ابو الحسن المشعري) : لا بد ان يكون في كل جود لون وكون وطعم ورائحة وحرارة وبرودة ورطوبة ويبدو له حياة او صند صا. وانما وجد في حالين فلو بد منه وجود بقاء فيه في كل حال بعد حال حدوثه."

(105) Usul, PP. 45 & 67. A slightly different variant of this theory is attributed to a certain Muhammad b. Shabib, cf. Ibid. P. 231.

(106) P. 45. - "اما العرض فانما يفتن في الثاني من حالة حدوثه"

cf. PP. 66-67, for a discussion of the various theories of extinction.

(107) Baghdadi argues that death is not merely the opposite of life as the philosophers hold - Ibid. P. 43. On P. 231, he notes significantly that Qalanisi affirmed baka' as a distinct notion from that of the body, contrary to Al-Ash'ari. The latter, though he admitted the latter thesis, rejected the former.

(108) Usul - P. 45 & P. 231 & P. 67.

(109) Al-Farq, P. 317.

cf. Ghazali's refutation of this theory in Tahafut, PP. 86-8, along the same lines as Ash'ari and Baghdadi.

(110) Usul, P. 137.

(111) Maqalat, PP. 402 ff. It is difficult to make out from Ash'ari's account the exact extent to which these Mu'tazilite doctors accepted this theory and its implications. What is indisputable is that this theory was discussed in Mu'tazilite circles and that the motives underlying its discussion were ethical. In a general way, the Mu'tazilite doctors here discussed fell into two categories: those who admitted 'generation' in toto: in the external and the internal worlds; and those who limited the role of the 'conscious agent' in this process to the mere imitation of a series of conditions, which forthwith became independent of his will. In both cases, the conscious agent represented, in the series, the primary determinant; the efficacy of his determination throughout the whole series being conceded only in the former case.

"وقال ابو الهذيل (ومن ذهب الى قوله) ان كل ما تولد عن (112)
 فعله مما يعلم كيفية فهد فعله".
 Ibid. P. 402.

(113) Ibid. P. 403.

(114) Ibid. PP. 406-407.

(115) Man, according to him, being an atom indwelling the body in the capacity of 'governor', with no contact or inherence (مماة وحلول) in it. Only consciousness, will, representation and hate are predicable of him, as intrinsic acts. Ibid. P. 405.

(116) Ibid. "و زعم ان المتولدات وما يحل في ارجاس من حركة وتكون
 دون دهم ... فهو فعل الجسم الذي حل فيه بطبيعته، وان المتولدات
 يفعل اوعا ضا التي حدثت فيه بطبيعته".

(117) Baghdadi - Usul, P. 46.

(118) Ibid.; Maqalat, P. 404; Milal, P. 38.

(119) Ibid. : "ان افعال الصبار كلها حركات فجب، وان تكون حركات اعتقاد.

Milal, P. 38. والعلوم والبرارات
 حركات النفس -

Here Shahrastani aptly remarks:

"ولم ير دبر هذه الحركة النقلة وانما الحركة عنده مبدأ تغيرها، كما
 قالت الفلاسفة".

(120) Ibid.

(121) Maqalat, P. 404. - "دري يجوز ان يفعل ان ارجاس"

(122) «حكى الكوفي عنه انه قال : ان كل ما جاد من محمد النبوة من النفل
 فهو من فضل الله تعالى بإيجاب المخلقة ، اي ان الله تعالى طبع الحجر طبعاً
 دخلته خلقة اذا دفعته اندفع واذا بلغ حدة الدفع صلبه عاد الحجر
 الى مكانه طبعاً . - Milal, P. 38.

This is how Ash'ari relates the same:

« ولما يتدل ان ما حدث في غير حيز اسكن فهو فضل الله سبحانه
 بإيجاب خلقة الشيء ، كذا صاحب الحجر عند دفعه الدافع داخلاً وعند رصيه
 وصلى ذلك ان الله سبحانه طبع الحجر طبعاً اذا دفعه دافع ان يذهب
 وكذلك في الاشياء المخلوقة . »

Maqalat, P. 404.

(123) Maqalat, P. 412.

(124) Ibid. P. 413.

(125) Usul, P. 137-8.

P. 138. «دلو اراد خلقه ذلك ابتداءً لظهور عليه» -

Compare opening passage, Tahafut, P. 17.

Al-Juwayni repudiates the mu'tazilite thesis of generation
 (tawallud) on two similar grounds:

(1). Its admission would entail the predication of causal
 determination of the creature and militate thus against the
 exclusiveness of its predicability of God.

(2). It implies a tacit belief in an impersonal, determinist
 inertia which dispenses with God altogether - since "events are said
 to emerge from a determined cause".

cf. Irshad, PP. 131-132., also P. 133.

(126) Maqalat, P. 406. cf. P. 407., for the story of the tent whence he derived his name.

cf. also, Ibid. PP. 568-569.

(127) Ibid. P. 407.

(128) Ibid. PP. 309-310.

(129) cf. Usul, - PP. 56-57, for the Orthodox Ash'arite teaching on this point.

(130) Maqalat, PP. 310-311.

(131) cf. Al-Ghazali's teaching on this point:

Ihya', IV, PP. 220-221.

Iqtisad, PP. 45-46.

Tahafut, PP. 293-296.

In criticising the position of Salihī, Baghdādī adduces a very interesting argument; namely, that the repudiation of necessary conditionality between these terms militates against the determination of God's attributes through analogy:-

« قد اجاز الصليحي من المقولة كون عالم كبريائيا قادرا مريدًا،
فلا يكذب له على هذا الدليل دلالة على ان الصانع حي؟ »

This is how he sums up the teaching of the Orthodox:

« اذا صح لنا ان الصانع عالم قادر مريد دائمية شرط في هذه الصفات

عندنا صح لنا استدلال بذكره على كونه حيًا »

Usul, P. 105.

also, cf. PP. 78-79.

(132) Maqalat, PP. 570-71, & PP. 310-12.

Also, Usul, PP. 56-57.

(133) cf. Maimonides - Guide, I, Ch. 73, Prop. 10, P. 128.

(134) Maqalat, P. 567.

(135) Tahafut, P. 294.

(136) Ibid. P. 295.

(137) For this definition of power, cf. Iqtisad, P. 39.

cf. also, for the argument here expounded, PP. 40-41; Tahafut, P. 70 ff.

Chapter Three.

(1) On the deceptive character of sense-experience in Ash'arism, cf. Guide, I, ch. 73, Prop. 12, PP. 132-3. Note on this question the famous critique of the validity of sensuous knowledge in Ghazali's *Mumqidh*, PP. 72 f. This negative part of his critique is, without doubt, inspired by the arguments of the Greek sophists, as set forth in Plato's *Protagoras* and *Theatetus*. With respect to the unreliability of deductive reasoning, we must add the Ash'arite notion of the contingency of the intellect which is attributed to Abul-Ma'ali and Ibn-Hazm by Averroes, *Tahafut*, PP. 541-2

(2) Maimonides is, without doubt, indebted to Averroes in the formulation of his critique of Islamic *alam*. His critique of the Ash'arite proof of creation *ex nihilo*; of their failure to demonstrate the existence of God, owing to their occasionalist presuppositions; of their scepticism and its nihilistic implications as well as their

sophistical demonstration of the beginning of the world in time -, are all derived directly from Averroes, as will become clear in the sequel. Maimonides departs from his master on a very important question: the rational indemonstrability of the beginning of the world in time, belief in which must be based on faith. Even this original solution of the problem is envisaged as a hypothetical possibility by Averroes in *Iahafut*, P.96 and 95.

(3) Loc. cit. PP.416-7 - Averroes writes:

"واما الاشعرية فانهم مجمدون اسباب المحسوسة ، اي لم يتبدلوا بكون بعض اسبابا لبعض ، ويعملوا على الموجد والمجسوس موجدان غير محسوسين يتبع من ان يكون غير متضاد في نفسه . وانكروا اسباب والمحيات ، وصد نظر خالف عن ادوات بما صدقات :

ibid.P.220, 219

- "واسد اشعرية نفوا العقل التي هي هنا"

"فمجددا (اي اشعرية) ادوات الصادرة عن الوجود الطبيعية ونفدا مع ذلك ان تكون بدو شيئا ، المحيية التي في الوجودات ، وقالا ان هذه الوجودات تظهر مقدرة بالمحي في الوجود ، داغا فاعلم المحي الذي في الفاعل ."

Against the Ash'arite doctrine of 'contingency of attributes' pertaining to things, cf. ibid.P.476 and PP.530-1.

cf. Alep, *Fasl al-Magal*, P.19 and *Kashf 'an Manahij*, PP.66-68.

(4) Ibid.P.520

"Effects whose causes cannot be perceived are unknowable and pursuable (*matlubah*) on account of the fact that their causes cannot be perceived. If, things whose causes cannot be perceived are unknowable and searchable by nature, then the causes of whatever is not unknowable are necessarily capable of being perceived. Only one who cannot distinguish between the knowable-in-itself ^{and unknowable-in-itself} would (call this into question)".

The word which I have rendered as perceived is 'mahsus' - which is the exact equivalent of the English both in its abstract and its empirical connotations. I believe, however, that Averroes cannot be said to confine the perception of causes to purely sensuous perception. More on this in the sequel.

(5) cf. Al-Ghazali's account of the matter which we have examined at length - Supra, P. 20.

(6) cf. Tahafut, PP. 432 ff. for this Aristotelian doctrine of the Act, "as the perfection of the substance-in-Potency and as the telos of its being, (Kamal) since it is indistinguishable from it in act." P. 433. This is how Averroes defines the Form, in relating the Peripatetic teaching on the distinction between form and Matter. "Form is the principle (ma'na) through which a being comes to be; and it is that which the name and definition designate; and that from which the action proper to an existing being emanates. It is this action which reveals the existence of Forms in things" Ib. Averroes is in this whole passage setting forth the reasoning of the Peripatetics in positing the Pure Act, as the principle of movement and activity in the universe.

(7) This is how Averroes formulates the problem of being and acting and the nihilistic consequences of a metaphysical monism: "It is self-evident that things have quiddities and properties necessitating the specific operations proper to an existing being and on account of which the quiddities, names and definitions of things are differentiated. Were an existing being devoid of a specific operation it would be devoid of a specific nature -, and

consequently shorn of a specific name and a specific definition. Thus things would become one thing and nothing at the same time. For the one is designated thus on account of the action or passion pertaining to it; so that if it is conceded that it has a specific action, then it follows that there are specific actions emanating from specific natures. If, on the other hand, it is alleged to be devoid of a specific action, then the one is not one; and if the nature of the one is negated then the nature of being is negated... and consequently not-being is posited of necessity"-
 "إذا ارتفعت طبيعة الموجد لزم عدمه".
 Iahafut, PP. 520 -521.

(8) Ibid.

(9) Ibid., p. 522

(10) Ibid. PP. 521-2

(11) Let me quote in full this central passage which I have attempted to outline above:

"Reason is nothing more than the knowledge (idrak) of things through their causes, whereby it differs from other noetic faculties. Whoever repudiates causes repudiates reason. For the science of logic posits as an axiom that there exist causes and effects, and that the knowledge of the latter cannot be adequate without the knowledge of their causes. The abolition of these things, therefore, amounts to an abolition of science...; because it implies that nothing is known with certainty but only as a matter of conjecture. Likewise, there would be no demonstration or definition

at all, since the essential predicaments upon which demonstrations rest are negated. Now whoever posits that there is no necessary science avows that his contention is itself necessary"- Ibid.P.522

(12) cf, Tahafut, P.215

(13) Ibid. P.531 - Averroes writes:

"If there is nothing in being except the possibility of the opposites, with respect to the agent and the patient, then there is no secure knowledge enduring for one instant of anything whatsoever; inasmuch as we assume an agent of this kind who tyrannizes upon things like a Despotic King whose word is law and with whom nothing is impossible in the width and length of his realm and of whose way no law or habit can be referred to. Evidently the acts of this monarch are necessarily unknowable; and even if an act is seen to be done by him, its continuity throughout every moment of time is necessarily unknowable."

(14) cf. Ibid. PP.219 and 257 - In both passages Averroes is arguing explicitly against the Ash'arites, who threaten to dissolve the identity of things and, therefore, their distinctions, by negating the fixity of their specific determinations and powers. cf. Also P.476

(15) cf. Ibid. PP.530-1 and note (13) above.

(16) cf. Ibid. P.220 and 158

"The Ash'arites claim that every activity,ⁱⁿ as much as it is activity, emanates from a willing, powerful, free, living, conscious Agent;

because this is necessitated by the nature of activity itself... since activity cannot emanate from the lifeless; ~~and~~ which is the attribute of the living alone. Thus they repudiate the acts emanating from natural objects, and likewise the acts pertaining to living, visible agents. These acts, they claim, appear in correlation with the visible agent, but ~~their~~ real author is the invisible living Agent. But this entails (contrary to their assumptions), that there is no life in the visible agent, since life is deducible from the acts of an agent; and what is more, wherefrom do they arrive at this judgment upon the Invisible Agent." P.220

The same argument is re-stated more fully, in *Kashf 'an Manalij*, P.89

(17) Averroes dwells at length on the negation of the causal determinations of things in its bearing on the demonstration of the existence of God, in '*Kashf 'an Manalij*',, PP.66-73. This negation, he argues, leaves us with no clue to the existence of God, since no 'reason or wisdom' can be said to inhere in the production of things. Contrary to the assumptions of the Ash'arites the argument from contingency (*jawaz*, or possibility of contraries) posits a random production, rather a creation by an intelligent creator. He writes:

و بالجملة متى رفعنا الاسباب والمسببات لم يكن صحتها شيء يرد به على
التأويلين بالاحتجاج به، اعني الذات مقدورة لاصناف صحتها... وذلك انه اذا قال
الاشعري ان وجود احد اعيان كثرية ادباي اثرات حدوثا ان صحتها محضها
فاعلم بان تؤول تلك ان تؤولا ان وجود الحوادث علما احد اعيان اثرات ادباي اثرات
صحة الاحتجاج به، من ادراكه انما تفعل لمعان سبب من اسباب. والذات يكون بغير علته و سبب
صحة الاحتجاج به

(L.cit.).68-9 The consequence of this position is either to repudiate the existence of the Author of the universe, absolutely, or the existence of such a wise, all-knowing author. cf.P.70

- (18) Ibid. - *فلزمهم (البراهنة) ان لا يكون في ذات الله حياة*
تؤاكيمة انما نشئت من حد من احواله. وايضا نحن ان بيت شعري
من هذا الحكم على ان لا يكون في ذات الله حياة
 cf. also p. 158 . p. 220.

(19) This is the substance of question III of Tahafut al-Falasifah which is entitled : 'On the (Philosophers') Duplicity (talbis) in speaking of God as the Author (fa'il) or Designer (Sani') of the universe.

(20) Ibid. cf. PP. 96-7 and 99, 100-2

(21) Ibid. P. 102

(22) "Now when the teaching of the mutakallims is scrutinised... it is seen that they have posited the Deity as an eternal man; inasmuch as they have assimilated the world to the products of man's will, knowledge and power. When they were told that (the Deity) must thus be a body, they retorted: 'But He is eternal and all bodies are in time (muhdath). Thus they were driven to posit an 'immaterial man' who is the author of all things." Tahafut, P. 425
 On the inability of the 'ash'arites to prove the incorporeity of God here referred to, cf. PP. 220-1, also Maimonides, Guide, I, ch. 76.
 P. 425.

cf. Tahafut, P. 148

(23) ~~The distinction between univocal and equivocal agents is Thomist in extraction. I borrow the Thomist expression because it conveys fully the idea which Averroes wishes to impart.~~
 cf. ~~Philosophia, 2.~~

(24) cf. Tahafut, P. 148

(25) Ibid. P. 149.

«لأن فعل الشيء الطبيعي ضروري في حوصره
وليس ضروريا في حوصره المرید ولكنه من نعمته»

This seems to me to mean that the volition of the agent (al-murid) cannot enter into natural activity as its necessary determinant, since the grounds of its necessary determination are immanent to itself; that is, consequent upon its own nature. Therefore, natural activity is such that it does not depend on the will of the free agent from whom it originates.

(26) Ibid. P.148

(27) Ibid. P.149. - Averroes puts it : "God wills through a will to dissimilar (la tushbih), the will of men ... and knows through a science which is dissimilar to human science. And as the mode (Kayfiyyah) of His science is incomprehensible, so is the mode of His will."

Averroes returns to this problem frequently in Nahafut, cf.e.g., PP.150-1. Here he makes an explicit statement of belief in creation ex nihilo. "The Philosophers", he writes, "believe that God ... is distinct from the universe... and that He is not an agent in the sense in which the visible agent is spoken^{of}, whether the voluntary (fa'll) or the involuntary; but rather that he is the author of these causes, who brings forth the universe out of nothing and sustains it in a manner nobler and fuller than in any of the visible agents". Ibid. P.151.

This statement is difficult to reconcile with Averroes's account of creation as 'composition' (tarkib-r.152); or as a process of 'bringing out from potency to act' (P.149); or as 'correlation' (irtibat) - 'inasmuch as a being is consequent upon correlation',

the two terms of which are said explicitly to be matter and form (PP.180-1)

In both instances Averroes is expounding with approval Aristotle's hylomorphic teaching on the question. Of this more in sequel.

infra P.

On the 'modus eminenter' cf. also PP, 424-7, 450, 439 and 441.

The teaching of Aquinas on the mode of predicating analogical attributes to the creature and the creator comes very near to Averroes's. cf. especially, S.Theol.Ia,Q13 and *Contingent*, I, 29-34, *infra* p.218ff.

(28) *Supra*, P.110. The former being the concept 'cause', the latter being the concept 'design'.

(29) cf. *Tahafut*, PP.219 -220

(30) *Ibid.* P.92. That is how Averroes winds up his argument against the thesis that God could have created a world of a different magnitude than the world actually created. cf. PP.88-91.

we will have occasion to return to this position and its deterministic implications. On same, cf. *Ib.* PP.412-3 . Also, *Kashf 'an manahij al Adillah*, PP.32-3

(31) cf. *Ibid.* P⁴.475-6 here Averroes is arguing against Ghazali's contention that the specifications of things depend on the divine fiat as their sole determinant.

(32) Note the Neo-Platonic account of the matter in *Tahafut*, PP.338-40

(33) cf. *Tahafut*, P.154.

(34) That is the Peripatetics and notably Aristotle, as is

explicitly stated in more than one place by Averroes.

(35) Ibid. cf. PP. 210 - 211. cf. also PP. 531 and 150 for a vindication of this theory of fourfold causality.

(36) Ibid. P. 433. "دان الصورة من المعنى الذي به صار المدجور موجوداً
وصي المدلول عليه باسم واحد".

(37) Ibid. P. 224 "الفاعل لما صار فاعل من جهة ما صار مدجور بالذات".

also P. 169. This formula recalls the famous Thomist formula to the letter: "unde unumquodque agens agit secundum quod actu est" - De Potentia, Q. 1, A. 11; also S. cont. Gentiles. II, ch. vi, vii, viii etc

(38) cf. Tahafut al-Falasifah, PP. 120, 176, 182 and supra P. (10) Note 42.

(To on proton)

(39) The One, or God, in the Neo-Platonic scheme is not strictly speaking the First Intellect (Nous), who is the first emanation from the One. Averroes calls it the 'One Separate Principle' or simply the One (al-awwal) - (P. 217). The order of the universe is stated explicitly to depend on the First Intellect or Nous (Ibid.); but it is clearly referable to the One (through the agency of this intellect). Averroes is trying in this passage to prove that God is a simple Intelligence (Ibid. P. 193 and 185 and PP. 434 ff.) - and his procedure is certainly congruous with Aristotle's; for whom God is "Thought thinking itself". Although the intellectuality of the First Principle is not here in question, it is difficult to see how in Arabian Neo-Platonic, Peripateticism the Plotinian notion of the 'to on proton', as a super-Intelligence,

was identified with Aristotle's notion of God, as a Primary Intelligence. The super-intellectuality of the One of Plotinus is of mystical inspiration and is certainly a notion sui generis, as compared with Aristotle's notion of God. It is therefore, difficult to see how in Aristotle the First Principle and the First Intellect can fail to coincide, assuming that they are two distinct principles. (in Plotinus),
 On super-Intellectuality of the One, cf. Enneades, III, 9.PP. 175 ff. tr. Bréhier, Paris 1925.

(40) cf. Ibid, PP.217 and 352. This is how in fact, Averroes resolves the conflict between Al-Ghazali and the Peripatetics (especially Avicenna). God's knowledge is altogether different from our own that no common term for comparison can be found. God's knowledge is 'cause of the known', whereas ours is 'effect of the known'. In Fasl al Maqal, Averroes writes: "This difficulty is resolved, according to us, by noting that the nature of eternal knowledge (sc. God's knowledge) in its relation to existents is different from temporal knowledge (ilm muhdath); inasmuch as the being of an existent is the cause and condition of our knowledge, whereas eternal science is the cause and condition of the existent. in question." P.23, cf. also Tahafut PP.352 and 462.

With respect to this distinction, Aquinas is in agreement with Averroes (cf. S.C.Gent, BkI, ch.49 & 50, S.Theol.I a, Q.14.a.5) Aquinas, however, criticises the Averroist thesis on the ground that it detracts of the perfection of God's knowledge. Averroes, according to Aquinas, has not proceeded beyond ascribing a

universal mode of knowing singulars to God; since he teaches that God knows singulars "in communi", that is, "inasmuch as they are beings"-(S.Theol.q.14. Art.6The reference is to Averroes, In Met.Lib. xii, comm.51, viii, 337 A). 'his charge is justifiable, as can be seen from Averroes's summary of the teachings of the Peripatetics on this question, in Tahafut, pp.462-3. Although Averroes concedes here a 'modus emanenter' to divine knowledge, the object to which this knowledge is referred is explicitly an 'ens eminenter' (wujud ash-faf).

(40) cf. Tahafut, pp. 232-332, --- this is the case.

(41) cf. for the exposition of this theme, Tahafut, pp.433-6.

(42) On the teleology grounded in First Principle - cf. Tahafut, p.232

(43) cf. supra, pp. 34 ff.

(44) Tahafut p.524. Averroes writes:

"It should not be doubted that things act upon one another and are generated out of one another, although they are not self-sufficing, in this production, but rather depend upon a Transcendant Agent, who is the condition of their operation as well as their being."

Also, Kashf 'an manahij, pp.86-7

(45) As an example of such accidents Averroes cites the so-called 'four creatures' - namely, the dry and the humid, the hot and the cold. cf. Ibid. p.526.

Accidents, according to the Ash'arites, are continually generated by God, cf. supra, The controversy between Averroes and the

Ash'arites revolves, therefore, around this very point. Averroes solves the difficulty by urging that the production of substances (jawahir) is the exclusive prerogative of God, whereas the accidents are generated by natural causes. In this sense, God is said to be the sole creator, or "Inventor of substances" (المخترع لمجواهر) - cf. Kashf 'an Manahij', PP.88-9

(46) Averroes writes, Tahafut, P.131.

"The activity of the agent, according to the Philosophers, is nothing other than (the process) of bringing what is in potency into act; so as to have reference to being on both sides". cf. also. Ibid. P.102, 156

(47) cf. Ibid. P.221

"The activity of the visible agent consists in converting a being from one character to another (Sifat) ... (that is) to bring about its conversion into the form and the specific property through which that being is transmuted into an object of a different essence, definition, name and operation."

(48) cf. P.180 ff. Expounding Aristotle's teaching on the manner in which the production of the universe must be ascribed to God, Averroes writes: "The answer according to the Philosophy/ is that things whose being depends on their correlation, as in the case of matter and form and the correlation of the simple particles of the universe, depend for their being on their correlation; so that the author of this correlation is the author of being."

This is how Averroes interprets the unity of the First Cause and its production of the universe. That Averroes betrays here the same failure as his master with respect to the creation ex nihilo and providence is obvious. The First cause is clearly not the Creator (Kāliq) but rather the Architect (Sanī') of the universe; so that Averroes has not really succeeded in meeting the allegation of Al-Ghazali against the Peripatetics in their negation of creation ex nihilo.

With respect to the preservation of the world in being, Averroes writes: "But He is (sc. God) the author of these causes, Bringer thereof forth from not-being to being; and Preserver thereof in a more perfect and more eminent mode than in visible agents." Ibid.P.151 - The not-being here referred to is potential not-being. (cf. Ibid PP. 105, 131, 142.), and the preservation is a preservation of eternal movement. cf. P. 168, where Averroes states explicitly that the "essence of the universe is movement". cf. also, PP. 59-60.

(49) *Supra*, p. 20.

(50) The distinction in the dual role of causality, between relative and absolute being is important because of its bearing on the problem of the analogical predicability of causality to God and things, to which we will return. The notion of Being as analagous would thus safeguard:

1. An ^{ontological} ~~ontological~~ conception of causality - i.e. a conception in terms of Being.
2. A non-univocal conception of Causality, in its manifold manifestations in the diverse causal relationships discoverable in nature.

3. The validity of the notion of First Cause as Creator, (its causality having regard to absolute Being).

4. The legitimate predicability of this concept of God, as first Cause, as well as of secondary causes. It is patent that the predicability of Being itself of the Creator and the creature is possible only through an analogical conception of the notion of 'Being'.

(51) Supra, p. 106.

(52) This, clearly, being the subject-matter of epistemology. The point here maintained is that epistemology, whatever its conclusions with respect to the nature, conditions and validity of knowledge, ought to set out from the fact of knowledge. The admission of this 'fact of knowledge' is sufficient for the cogency of the argument as stated above.

(53) > These two notes have never existed.
 (54) They figure here through oversight on the part of the typist.

(55) Although Averroes does not state the argument in question in these words, the grounding of knowledge in induction tallies fully with his claim that definitions are impossible if causality is abolished; since as a true Aristotelian, he could not hold that such definitions are possible a priori, - an admission which would in any case defeat his own ends and destroy the alleged bond between causality and being.

(56) cf. Supra, P. 43, (note 7). I must quote the conclusion of the passage in which Averroes proves the concomitance between Causality and knowledge, from the nihilistic consequences of its negation: "Were an existing being devoid of a specific operation it would be devoid of a specific nature and consequently shorn of a specific name and a specific definition. Thus things would become one thing and nothing. For the one is designated thus on account of the action and passion pertaining to it...(So that if it is alleged) to be devoid of a specific action then the one is not one,; and if the nature of the one is negated, then the nature of Being is negated too." - Tahafut, PP. 520-21.

(57) Tahafut, P. 521.

(58) Ibid, P. 523.

(59) Koran, XXXV, 41.

(60) Tahafut, P. 523. The reference to Abul-Ma'ali and Ibn Hazm, cf. Ib. pp. 541-542.

(61) Ibid, PP. 523-24.

(62) Tahafut al-Falasifah., P. 287 & Supra, P. 45.

(63) Ibid. & Supra, P. 46 ff.

(64) Tahafut at-Tahafut, PP. 537-538.

(65) The distinction which Averroes has in mind here is that between the 'common' (i.e. primary) matter, as shorn of all specific forms, and the 'signate matter' (materia signata of Aquinas and the scholastics) which represents the immediate substratum of any specific form. Averroes calls the latter the 'specific matter' (maddah khasah), P. 531- Tahafut.

(66) "The philosophers reject (this contention) and urge that were it possible, then wisdom would have enjoined that man be created without these intermediaries; since this creator in this manner would be the best and ablest of creators." Tahafut, P. 540.

(67) Supra, P. 7.

(68) Supra, P. 8.

(69) Averroes attributes this naturalistic interpretation exclusively to Avicennaⁿ, cf. Tahafut, P. 515.

(70) Tahafut, P. 514.

(71) Ibid, P. 515. Averroes is advocating here the principle of authority, as the initial ground of speculative and practical disciplines. The implications of this thesis will become clear in the sequel.

(72) cf. Tahafut, P. 527. This 'pragmatic theory' of religious truth whose validity rests upon the social role it plays in affording a 'social deterrent' (wazi' ijtima'i) against unvirtuous conduct is expounded in PP. 581-586. The origins of this theory are to be sought in Ibn Tofail's famous 'Hay ibn Yaqzan' - in which also, the origins of the theory of the two-truths is to be found.

(73) Averroes writes: "Not everything which is possible-in-itself (fi tab'ihī) can be performed by man. Because what is possible for man is clearly known; so that the greater number of things possible-in-themselves are impossible for him. The power of the prophet to perform a miracle (is to be reckoned among) things impossible-for-man though possible-in-themselves. But this would not justify the claim that things impossible-in-reason are possible, even for the prophet." Tahafut, P. 515.

(74) Ibid. PP. 515-516. cf. also: Kashf 'an Manahij, PP. 73ff. In the course of his examination of the claim of the mutakallims that miracle represents conclusive evidence for the genuineness of revelation and prophecy, Averroes returns to the same point. Here he reduces the role of the prophet to promulgating moral laws (wadh al-sharā'i) - *ibid.* P. 78; miracle as the extraordinary manner in which such laws are set forth, as in the Koran (Ibid P. 79). Other forms of miracle, such as healing the sick, Averroes argues, have nothing miraculous about them and do not, in any case, confirm

the genuineness of the prophet's claims but rather his ability as a physician. (Ibid PP. 76,78-79). The miraculousness of the Koran from its stylistic perfection is waived gently aside, Ibid.P.77.

(75) cf., for instance, Shahrastani, Nihayat al Iqdam, PP. 447-451; Baghdadī, Usul ud- Din - PP. 183-4 ; Al-Juwaynī, al-Irshad - PP. 199 ff ; Al-Ghazālī, Ihya', II, p. 346 ; Al-Jurjani, A.Q., I'jazul- Qor'an - ; Ar-rafi'i, M.S., *Tahf Rayat al-Qor'an*.

(76) This is the substance of Averroes's own retort to the Mutakallims, in Manahij, P. 74ff. Averroes resolves the problem into two propositions: A miracle has been ascertained; whoever performs a miracle is a prophet. The 'major premiss' being actually gratuitous, no conclusion can be derived from these two premisses. cf. Ibid, P. 76. In all this reasoning the fact of faith in supernatural revelation is tacitly presupposed. When Averroes turns to determine the miraculousness of the Kor'an in authenticating the prophecy of Muhammad he reduces this miraculousness to the superiority of the moral code promulgated in it. The curious thing to note is that Averroes invokes the authority of the Koran in validating this thesis (ibid P. 78) succumbing thus to the dialectic of circularity. The qualification that a supernatural origin (biwahyin minal-lah) must attach to this moral code is vindicated on the grounds of the pragmatic thoroughness of Koranic law (Ibid P. 80) and its extraordinary coherence and social usefulness (P. 81) which he corroborates from within the Koran itself. Nowhere does Averroes seem to proceed beyond the genuinely ordinary and natural.

(77) Whatever apologetic muslim theologians might think about the matter, there is absolutely no doubt that muslim consciousness has in general equated the miraculousness of the Koran with its stylistic perfection. Even learned theology fails to specify any other tenable ground of belief in al-jaz save stylistic perfection. I fully concur with Nöldeke (cf. chapter ^{II} on Koran in 'Sketches from Eastern History') (Eng. tr., London & Edinburgh, 1892 - pp. 34-36) that it is truly baffling that this claim for stylistic perfection should have ^{been} accepted with such docility by the greatest of Arabian authors and prosodists, when its legitimacy is all too unwarranted.

(78) We have already touched on Al-Ghazali's teaching on this question supra P.21410. Aquinas' teaching on the same question can be found in S. Theol. Ia, Q.7., arts., 1 and 2.

S. cont. Gent. Bk. I., ch. 84

De Potentia, Q. I, arts. 3 and 4.

(79) Both Stoicism and Neo-Platonism, though admittedly philosophic systems, have indisputable religious implications.

(80) The figure is borrowed from the Aristotelian conception of the body-soul relationship. Aristotle, as is well-known, defines the soul as the "form of an organic body endowed with life"-De Anima, II, 1, p. 412^a-30.73

(81) The legitimacy and meaning of this term will be justified in the sequel.

(82) The tract in question is entitled: 'Fasl al-Maqal fi ma bayha 'l-Hikmat wash-Shari' ah minal' it-Tisal'. Like the Tahafut this tract was unknown to the scholastic doctors of the 13th century.

It represents the only ex profess^o treatment of the subject by Averroes and is a work of singular originality. The Tahafut was translated into Latin for the first time by Calo Calonymos in 1328 and was published in Venice in 1437. cf. Munk-Mélanges, PP.435-6; and Renan-Averroes et L'Averroïsme, Paris, 1866, P.216.

In a long study of Averroes's teaching on the subject of reason and faith, M. Asin Palacios maintains that the Averroist teaching is identical with Aquinas'. cf. article entitled El Averroísmo teológico de Tomás de Aquino, in Estudios de erudición Oriental, Zaragoza, 1904. PP.27 - 331. This thesis is decried by P. Mandonnet (in Siger de Brabant, pt.I, PP.149-150) as 'baseless' on these grounds:

1. The Averroist concession to religion is purely pragmatic, religion being intended for the use of the vulgar.

2. In the event of conflict, Averroes sacrifices the rights of reason in favour of 'allegorical interpretation'; vindicating thus the supremacy of faith over reason.

3. The contents of the Averroist system leave no room for doubt regarding the sympathies of Averroes.

(83) The major tenets of Latin Averroism which the condemnation of 1277 singled out were: 1. the error of the two-truths.

2. the unity of the intellect (on this cf. th. Aquinas's famous tract, De Unitate intellectus contra Averroistas - Latin text and French trans, in Opuscles, no.16, Paris 1857).
3. The eternity of the world.
4. the negation of creation ex nihilo, and 4. the negation of providence. The first condemnation of Averroism came

about in 1270 and was confined to 13 propositions, which coincide roughly with the 20 theses of Al-Ghazali's *Tahafut*. This was followed in 1277 by the final condemnation, by Etienne Tempier, Bishop of Paris, at the instance of Pope John XXI of 219 propositions which are declared erroneous and heretical. Three significant propositions which figure out among the 13 props. condemned in 1270 ought to be cited here, because of their bearing on what we have called Averroist determinism. These are the propositions relating to the negation of providence and of free will. Prop. 3 runs thus: "Quod liberum arbitrium est potentia passiva non activa; et quod necessitate movetur ab appetibili" As to the negation of providence, Prop. 12 runs thus: "Quod humani actus non reguntur providentia Dei". Note this prop. "Quod omnia, que hic inferius aguntur, subsunt necessitate corporum celestium." (prop. 4.) Compare with this Q. 16 (PP. 254-8) of Al-Ghazali's *Tahafut* (Continued p. 64, Note 28')

(84) Op.cit. P. 13 and 15.

(85) Ibid. Averroes actually distinguishes four modes of dialectical reasoning, employed by theology (ash-shari'ah).

a. Dialectical or rhetorical arguments whose premisses though not apodictic are commonly known or believed; but the conclusions of which are nevertheless apodictic. Analogy from these conclusions is illegitimate, however. Religious propositions belonging to this category ought not to be interpreted allegorically (the verb is *awwala* or *tawalla*).

b. Arguments whose premisses, though commonly known or believed, are apodictic; and whose conclusions are signs (*mithalat*) of what they are

in fact designed to prove. These can be interpreted.

c. Arguments, whose premisses, on the contrary, are not apodictic; but whose conclusions coincide with what they are meant to prove.

(i.e. are non-apodictic in intention). The premisses of these arguments can be interpreted but not their conclusions.

d. Arguments, whose premisses are not necessarily apodictic, and whose conclusions are signs to what they are designed to demonstrate.

The duty of the elect (المختار) in these is interpretation, of the vulgar acceptance ab extrinseco (ابن سينا).

The general principle, Averroes concludes, is "that whatever cannot be attained except through demonstration, in the matter of allegorical interpretation, ought to be interpreted by the 'elect', and ought to be accepted by the vulgar ab extrinseco". Ibid. P.16

(86) Aristotle draws a general distinction between demonstrative

(or scientific) and sophistical knowledge - cf. An.Post. Bk.I, 2, (and Topica I, 1, P.100a)

P.71 b. The whole of the Posterior Analytics is devoted to

demonstrative reasoning, its nature and conditions. The Soph.

Elenchis opens up with this distinction between genuine and sophistical reasoning. Sophistical arguments are divided into:

Didactic, Dialectical, Examination-arguments, and contentious

arguments. Aristotle defines dialectical arguments as follows:

"Those that reason from premisses generally accepted, to the contradictory of a given thesis". L.cit. ch.2, P.165 b; or as

"reasoning from opinions that are generally accepted". Top.Bk.I,

P.100a. The nature of rhetorical reasoning is expounded in Bk.I

of Rhetorica. Here Aristotle sets Rhetoric in contrast with

dialectic, in the genuine sense of rational argument. P.1354a.

Both, Aristotle believes, are concerned with matters "that come more or less within the general ken of all men". Ib. - Note the contrast with Averroes's position. That rhetoric achieves its ends by playing on the emotions of men is stated explicitly in P.1356a-1445; followed by a discussion of the emotions in their relation to persuasion in Bk.II, chs.2-11. The greatest classic of the latter aspect of rhetoric is Plato's *Gorgias*.

(87) *Al-Fasl*, P.17. On scholastic theology, (Kalam) as dialectical, cf. *Manahij*, P.47.

(88) *Tahafut* and the retort of Averroes in *Tahafut at Tahafut*, PP.495-500. Also, *supra* P.16 In the condemnation of 1277 there are singled out, further, the Neo-Platonic contention regarding the impossibility of the ^{many} multiple emanating from the One. (Prop.44 ; *Tahafut*, Q.3, 3rd.argument, PP.110-132. and *Tahafut at Tahafut* - *ibidem*, PP.173-263. (Note especially Averroes's own position (PP.180-2); as well as the whole series of corollaries of Neo-Platonic emanationism. (cf. Props, 95, 94, 59, 54, 43). On ~~the~~ determinism and the negation of contingent causes altogether, cf. Props. 197, 195, 60, 206, 21, 59. On the negation of providence and of the possibility of direct divine intervention in nature, cf. Props. 63, 43, 54, 160.

For the history of Latin Averroism and the story of the condemnations of 1270 and 1277, see the monumental work of P. Mandonnet - *Siger de Brabant*, Louvain, 1908-1911. For a list of the propositions condemned, *Op-cit*, Pt.II, PP.178-84 and Pt.I.P.111.

An interesting tract, *De Erroribus Philosophorum*, attributed generally to Gilles de Rome (cf. *Rénan-Averroes et L'Averroïsme*, P.349 -, a thesis contested by Mandonnet in *L.cit.*) lists the errors of Averroes under 13 items, which coincide with the main propositions condemned in 1277; notably: the eternity of the world, the falsity of all religions: - 'Quod nulla lex est vera, licet possit esse utilis - No.2'. cf. *Siger de Brabant*, Pt.II, P.10 and 8-9; also *Rénan*, *Op.cit.* PP.349-52.

(88) *الحكمة لها حجة الشرعية وانما حجت الرضائية؟*

cf. *Op.cit.* P.21 and P.6. also, *Aashf*, PP.58-9

(89) *Fasl*, PP. 6 and 7

(90) cf. *Tahadut*, PP.582-6. After expounding the agreement of philosophy and theology, on the question here envisaged (sc. resurrection), Averroes writes:

"It is manifest from this that all the philosophers hold this opinion with respect to religion: namely, that the prophets and lawgivers be followed over the practical principles and the promulgated laws of any given creed. According to them, the more these necessary principles represent an incentive to virtuous deeds, the more commendable they are". *Ib.* P.584.

That theology has regard merely to what falls within the scope of the consciousness of the vulgar can be seen from this passage:

"All this, to my mind, is an encroachment on religion and a scrutiny of what is not enjoined by any religion, owing to the

incapacity of human faculties to attain to it. For not every science on which religion is silent should be scrutinized and the vulgar be informed about the results achieved by speculation... because this would lead to great confusion.... such is the case of the lawgiver (Prophet Muhammad) who imparted to the vulgar only a measure (of knowledge) conducive to their happiness". Ibid.PP. 428-9. Also, PP 357-8

(91) Averroes reproaches Al-Ghazali, in more than one place, for divulging the hidden secrets of demonstration to the vulgar, since the knowledge of these pertains exclusively to the specially gifted (or ar-rasikhun fil-'ilm). cf. Tahafut, PP.357,528,463, 108, 428. Also, FasI,P.3 and 14, etc.

(92) cf. on the question of faith in its relation to reason:

S.cont.Gent., Bk.I, chs.3,5,7.

S.Theol., Ia, Q.I, as.1 and 8.

II-II, Q.II, as.3 and 4.

De Trinitate, Q. III, a.1 ; etc.

(93) Averroes himself concedes this transcendence of revelation , at least nominally in Tahafut, P.428. But this concession is offset by the opposite thesis that the scrutiny of the inmost secrets of religion, though prohibited for the vulgar, is permissible for the 'specially gifted', and is in fact, their duty. cf. Ib.P357, for instance; fasI, PP.8 and9, and P.17

(94) I do not propose to dwell any further on this aspect of Thomist epistemology. All contemporary Thomist^{scholars} discourse on the

singular originality of this reconciliation of the respective claims of reason and faith. I leave the eulogy of the originality of this position to more eloquent panygerists.

cf.e.g., Gilson, *Le Thomisme*; Phil. and M.Age, pp.528 ff. Maritain. *Degres du savoir*, ch. V, i. *Et c.* Bertillon, *Foundations of Thomism*.

(95) This term which occurs, in the same context, in the introduction, P. 3. Must be justified. In the technical sense, of course, neither Aristotle nor Averroes believed in the homogeneity of Being; since for them being is not a genus -, therefore cannot be in one genus. The term is here meant to denote the uniform and natural character of being, and its laws, as opposed to the unique and supernatural, that is, heterogeneous character of what religion introduces, as miraculous and extraordinary.

(96) cf. *supra*, p. 6.

(97) cf. Roland-Gosselin, *Le de Ente et Essentia de St. Thomas*, P.65
cf. Farabi - *Ara' ahl al-Madinah al-Fadhilah*.

(98) cf. *Tahafut al-Falsifah*, PP.37-8 et seq.

(99) *Ibid.* PP.96-7 and 101

(100) It is interesting to note how the Neo-Platonic notion of necessary emanation is taken over by Aquinas and adapted to the rationalization of the mode of the procession of the Divine Persons;

whereas voluntary activity is adapted to the doctrine of creation. The emanation of the second and Third Persons from the Father is called 'procession'; the emanation of the creatures called 'creation'.

(101) cf. S.Theol.Ia. Q.13.arts.5 and 6; S.cont.Gent.Bk.I, chs. 30, 32-4. On will and freedom in God, cf.L.cit.Q.19, arts.1.and 10.

(102) Averroes declares overtly his departure from Avicenna and Al-Farabi over the emanationist scheme, cf.Tahafut,PP. 179-180 et seq.,229 et seq.,245-50;259-62. In this respect he lines up with Al-Ghazali in criticizing the arbitrary construction of ^{the} Neo-Platonic galaxy of the Intelligences and the Planetary spheres. He does this, without doubt, in the name of genuine Aristotelianism. If his genuine reading leads him to take this independent view, he remains nevertheless a 'child of his philosophical environment' in adhering tacitly to the major emanationist tenets of Arabian Neo-Platonic Peripatetism. cf. Tahafut,PP.210-8, in the course of his exposition of the Peripatetics' procedure in formulating the scheme of the celestial hierarchies - which it is true, he admits is not demonstrative in character - Ib.P.209 and 218 - Averroes sets forth with tacit approval the motives of the Peripatetics in formulating this scheme.

cf.Com.on.Met. Bk.xii, ch.4, pp.153-4

(103) This is precisely how Aquinas explains the failure of the ancients to arrive at the notion of creation ex nihilo - in S.Theol. Ia-Q.44, art.2, Q.45, art.2.

(104) cf. Topica, Bk. I, Ch. 11, P. 104b; Phys. VIII., Ch. 1, 250b & 251b. Aquinas's defence of Aristotle over the problem of the eternity of the world, in S. Theol. Ia, Q. 46, art. 1, is valid within the limited, formal context in which it is raised. But seen in the perspective of the whole Aristotelian system with its irreducible distinction between Act and Potency, which coincides with the parallel distinction between Matter and Form, Aristotle's position can scarcely be said to be equivocal. In this respect, we believe, Averroes is truer to the spirit of Aristotle than Aquinas. Of course, the adducing of isolated texts from Aristotle cannot settle the problem; for other isolated texts can be opposed to these, - such for instance, Met. XII, Ch. 10, 1075b34 - where Aristotle states categorically that the world is eternal.

Maimonides's defence of Aristotle (Guide, Pt. II, Ch. 15) seems to be the direct source of Aquinas's. The two are, in fact, identical.

(105) Supra, P. 81.

The origin of Maimonides's gibe against the Ash'arites can be found in Averroes, - Kashf 'an Manahij al-Adillah, P. 26. Averroes writes: "The famous method (of the Ash'arites regarding the proof of the existence of God) rests on demonstrating that the world is in time (hadith), which rests in turn on the theory of the atomic composition of bodies This method, however, is not demonstrative nor does it conduce to certainty with respect to

the existence of God. Now if we suppose that the world is created in time (hadith), it follows as they say that it should of necessity have a Creator (muhdith). But it is precisely this which is in question." For we would be confronted with an insoluble dilemma with respect to this Creator, as to whether to posit him as eternal or temporal; either of which is absurd - the latter because it would involve us in the predicament of an infinite regress, the former because it entails one of two difficulties: that the world should be eternal, since its Author is eternal; or that its Author should be temporal, since this is necessitated by the principle that the temporal should have reference to a temporal agent, except on the assumption of a temporal act emanating from an eternal agent - which is discounted by the Ash'arites themselves.

Op. Cit. P. 26 & Seq.

(106) cf. Tahafut, PP. 245-246.

(107) Tahafut, P. 495 & 497ff.

(108) Op. Cit. P. 10. Averroes writes:

"The second category is that which is a mean between these two extremes - sc. the world as a whole - This is a being which comes out of nothing and is not preceded by time." This, however, is offset by arguments based on Koranic texts and purporting to show that creation ex-nihilo and in time is not incompatible with Koranic teaching. Ibid P. 11. cf. also, infra, P. 163 & Note 124.

(109) This is what Aristotle calls it. Met. XII, 1074a 35-8, & 1072a24. Elsewhere he calls it the First Mobile, Phys. viii.260a2.

- generally the 'primary, eternal, single movement.' Met.xii.
1073a25. Averroes calls it simply the 'Heavenly Body' - (al-
jurum as-Samawi), Tahafut, P. 59.

(110) cf. for this argument, Tahafut, PP. 58-59.

(111) Al-Ghazali, Tahafut, P. 60.

(112) Averroes, - Tahafut, P. 88.

(113) Ibid. PP. 95-97.

(114) cf. Tahafut, P. 68.

(115) Ibid.

(116) Phys. VIII., Ch. 1, P. 251a10.

(117) Ibid. III., Ch. 1, P. 201a10. This is the general
Aristotelian definition of motion; the former being a mere
application of the concept of motion to that which is in motion.
Obviously, the 'potential' and the 'movable' - as well as the
alterable - Ibid. 201a12, - are interchangeable concepts in the
Aristotelian scheme.

(118) Physics, VII. Ch. 1, P. 251a, 18-21.

(119) cf. Averroes - Tahafut, P. 97 - Al-Ghazali's text; as in
Tahafut, P. 66.

(120) Tahafut, PP. 100-102.

(121) The former, because it is contradictory that not-Being itself should become Being; the latter because actualized Being is already Being in act. It is interesting to note how the impossibility of admitting the conversion of not-Being into Being is the starting-point of Eleatic metaphysics and the ground of the Parmenidian conception of Being as one, abiding and immutable. Aristotle, as is well-known, solves the Parmenidian, Eleatic dilemma of the abiding identity of Being, by introducing the notion of Being in potentiality and Being in act. As Averroes observes, becoming ought to be conceived as a process of transition from the former state to the latter; rather than from not-Being to Being. For Parmenides, Aristotle and Averroes the conversion of not-Being into Being is impossible. Creationism^m, in fact, begins exactly where these three great advocates of the eternity of Being leave off. The final enshrinement of creationism, in philosophic terms, as an 'absolute conversion' of not-Being to Being was achieved by Aquinas.

(122) cf. Tahafut, PP.105 - 6.

The transition from not-Being to Being referred to above relates obviously to relative not-Being, that is of not -Being which is in potentiality to Being -, and this is precisely the role of matter. This not-Being, that is to say, is the equivalent of potential Being. cf. Tahafut, PP.163-4

(123) Averroes actually attacks the teaching of Islam, Christianity and Judaism on the creation ex nihilo - (opinio loquentium in nostr a lege et lege Christianum: de qua ^{or} Jones Christianus opinabat

quod possibilitas non est nisi in agente") (L.cit.P.143) - elsewhere (overleaf ib.) he refers to the "Loquentes trium legum, quae hodie quidem sunt, dicere aliquid fieri ex nihilo." His view, which he argues is that of Aristotle himself, is stated thus:

"Dicemus sicut facit invenire, et est extrahere illud, quod est in potentia in actum... Et ideo dicitur quod omnes proportionales, et formae sunt in potentia in prima materia, et in actu in primo motore, et assimilatur aliquo modo esset eius, quod fit in anima artificis." In Met.xii, Venice 1552, P.143b.

cf. also, ib.ix, P.104a; in Phys. viii, P.155a.

Averroes returns to this question, with striking insistence whenever the occasion arises. This, as well as the notion of volitional activity, in God represent a recurrent theme in his polemic against 'Loquentes nostra legis'. cf. in Phys.viii, P.159a, 161b.

cf. S.Theol.Ia, Q.44 arts.1 and 2, Q.45, art.1; S, cont Gent.Bk.II, chs.15,16. De Potentia, Q.III, art.1. The clue to the Thomist solution of the problem of creation is the thesis that, contrary to the assumptions of Aristotle and Averroes, ^{creation} is not a form of mutation; but rather, a mode of activity sui generis. cf. De Potentia, Q.III, art.2; S.Cont.Gent.II, chs.16,17,18.

Quoted, Renan - Averroes et l'Averroïsme, Paris 1866, PP.108 ff. The discussion which follows this quotation ought to be read with diligence, because of the earnestness with which Renan expounds the Averroist teaching with manifest approbation.

(124) In Rasl, P.10, Averroes points out that the philosophers

and the Ash'arites are in agreement over the eternity of God and the non-eternity of particular existents; but it is over the status of the world as a whole that they are in disagreement. Now with respect to this, they are all agreed that it comes out of nothing, is not preceded by time, and comes-to-be through an agent. With respect to time, the opinions of Plato and Aristotle are at variance: the former holding it to be finite, the latter infinite. After this analytical account, Averroes betrays his approbation of Aristotle's position by declaring that the universe is neither really eternal nor really temporal (ليس محدثاً حقيقياً ولا قديماً حقيقياً); since "the really temporal is necessarily absurd and the really eternal is without cause". In support of his thesis, Averroes cites different verses from the Qor'an which are not incompatible with the eternity of the world. Here he writes:

« فان ظاهر الشرح اذا تم تلحق نزهة من ادبيات الداروة في الدنيا عن ايجار العالم ان
 صدرته محدثة بالحقيقة ، وان نفس الوجود والزمان مستمرين الطرفين ، اعني عند
 منتظم . وذلك ان قوله تعالى : وهذا الذي خلقنا من قبل في ستة ايام
 وكان امره عند اعاء ، يقتضي بقاءه . والى وجوده قبل هذا الوجود ، وهذا هو
 دلائل وزمانا قبل الزمان ، اعني المقتن جدارة هذا الوجود . »

Ibid.P.11.

follows an admonition for tolerance, as regards accusations of infidelity, owing to the complexity of the problem.

(125) Tahafut, PP.96-7

(126) Ibid.P.162 - Averroes argues that the universe is not said by the Philosophers to be eternal per se (qadim bidh-dhat); since this would entail that it is uncaused . It is said to be

eternal, rather, in the sense of being in 'continuous production', and "this is more appropriately referred to God than discontinuous production." It was on this account that the ancient Philosophers opted for calling the universe eternal.

The conjugal figure is Aristotle's - cf. phys. 2, 9, 192^a-22.

(127) This statement of the matter would be inaccurate if it ^{is} were left unqualified. 'Form' is complete and self-sufficient; it stands in no need of union with Matter. Similarly Matter in its indetermin^{aten}ess does not limit the Form in any way. For Plato, whose start^{ing}point is the form, the problem of the union between Form and matter, however, remains an insoluble riddle. For Aristotle, whose starting-point is the fact of their concrete union, the question as to why they should copulate, as it were, does not arise at all. It is to be noted that the very distinction between these two principles (Matter and Form) is dictated by the desire to explain the fact of this union; so that this naturally is in no need of a justification.

(128) Tahafut, P.524 and 519 - 20. cf. Supra, Pp.122 & 123; Note 48.

Chapter Four.

(1) We have already noted how Averroes and Maimonides expose the futility of the Ash'arite, occasionalist argument for the existence of God from the nature of contingent existence.

c.f. Supra, pp. 81 & 110. If occasionalism is unable to demonstrate this existence; and if its claims that God is the unique agent in the operations of nature are groundless, on account of its repudiation of any causal relationship between agent and patient, then its belief in the existence of God and His role as Unique Agent can only be an a priori and arbitrary belief.

(2) This manner of speech, as well as the figure of 'exteriorization' of the divine will which recurs in this section must be justified. Aquinas teaches that power, although it posits a real relation in the creature, is not distinct from God's action (Cont. Gent. II, 8; De Pot. Q. 3, art. 3 - Res:) which is one with His essence. Power must be conceived as a positive relation in the creature, which posits merely a relation 'of reason' to God (Ibid. 10, 13, 14; S. Theol. I. Q. 45, art. 3 - ad.1) but leaves them totally unaffected in reality. Aquinas is wrestling with a genuine difficulty: creation as a temporal event threatens to introduce change in God or add something to His perfection. (II, Sent., dist. 1). In knowing and volition we are dealing with immanent acts, which remain within an agent. But creation, although immanent in a real sense, posits something extrinsic (viz; the creature) to God's will. This difficulty is solved in S. Theol. I, Q. 14, a. 8, by urging that it is God's knowledge and will which

are the cause of things, - both being immanent acts of the divine essence. Creation implies thus no exteriority, except with regard to the creature; and here it signifies the mode of relation of the creature to God, as its First Principle (S. Theol. I, Q. 45, a. 3). With regard to God, creation is not exteriority since God knows and wills things in the unity of His eternal knowledge and fore-ordination, rather than under the aspect of temporality (Ibid, Q. 14, a. 5 & 7; Q. 19, a. 2).

That in creation there is an 'outgoing' of God is clear from Aquinas's teaching that God is unto things the cause of being, in His capacity as unique First Being (Cont. Gent. II, 15; S. Theol. I, Q. 44, a. 1). This teaching need not be interpreted pantheistically, since the Thomist conception of the analogy of being and the absolute transcendence of God, safeguard the irreducible distinction between the Creator and the creature. The creature, however, participates in the divine being (S. Theol. Ib.) while remaining distinct from it; thus it is other than God. This otherness is meaningless from the standpoint of God, as we have seen. But it must be a positive otherness, if we are to avoid the pantheistic predicament and retain the irreducible distinction between the Creator and the creature. Inasmuch as it cannot be an otherness of being, or of spatiality or contingency, or of temporality (since God cannot be included in the same category of time as the creature), this relationship of otherness would have to be conceived as one of transcendence or infinitude. If the

causal conception is clearer than these two conceptions, then this otherness could be described as the otherness of cause and effect, - the common term in which is that of dependence. So that all that creationism asserts would be the dictum that an order of being, existing in conditions of spatiality and temporality, depends upon an Absolute Being, who is exempt of these conditions. And that this dependence is an absolute (De. Pot., q. 3, a. 3, Resp.) dependence. How the Absolute, Eternal, Principle of things can bring forth that order of temporal being, in and through the inward movement of ~~this~~ ^{the} essence, is of course a mystery. Whatever its character, this creative act is ^{far} from being, in the strict sense, an 'outgoing', a 'wandering beyond itself' of the Absolute - as Hegelianism teaches.

The justifiability of the metaphoric language we have used can be defended by analogies from Aquinas himself, who speaks of an exire in creation (II, Sent. 1, dist. 1, q. 1, art. 2): "Utrum aliquid possit exire ab eo per creationem" and further on, "Videtur quod per creationem nihil ^a Deo possit exire in esse.", etc.

(3) The term Loquentes refers to the Mutakallimun, whose teachings are expounded in Pt. I, Chs. 73-75 of Maimonides's 'Guide of the Perplexed', through which they became known to the 13th. century scholastics. Chapter 71 relates briefly the origins of Mu'tazilite and Ash'arite schools in their controversy with the philosophers, especially over the question of creation ex nihilo. In the Hebrew translation of the Guide (Moreh nebukhim) the Mutakallims are called ^a Medebberim, - which was rendered in Latin as Loquentes. Mention of

these Loquentes (or Loquentes in lege maurorum - or - in lege saracenorum; lit.: disputants in the law of the moors or the Saracens) occurs in Chs. 65, 69 and 97 of the Third Book of the Summa Contra Gentiles of Aquinas, and in De Potentia, Q. III, art. 7; De Verit. Q. 5, a. 9 - ad 4.

Their teaching is criticised also in S. Theol. I. Q. 45, a. 8; Q. 8, a. 1; Q. 115, a. 1; in II. Sent., dist. I, Q. 1, a. 4 — cf. Schmolders, Essai, P. 138 and Gilson - Pourquoi St. Thomas a critiqué St. Augustin, in Arch. d'Hist. doct. et litt. au moyen age I (1926-27) PP. 10 & 15. A number of contemporary writers have made casual references to the Thomist critique of the occasionalism of the Loquentes in question, e.g., Gilson in Op. Cit.; M. Asin Palacios in Algazel, Dogmatica Moral, Ascetica, P. 787 and Me'langes Mandonnet, T. II, PP. 60-64; S. De Beaurecueil in Bulletin de l'Institut francais d'Archéologie Orientale, Tome XLvi, 1947 - PP. 220-22; J. de Finance, in Etre et Agir dans la Phil. de St. Thomas, P. 154. The author rightly remarks that the term Mutakallim or Loquentes, although it refers to all schools of Muslim speculative theology, denotes especially the Ash'arite school which represents the 'extreme right' of Muslim orthodoxy.

Mention must also be made of Renan's discussion of the motives of the Mutakallims in the formulation of their occasionalist metaphysics, in Averroes et L'Aver., Paris 1866, PP. 106-7.

(4) cf. Mandonnet, Siger de Brabant, on negation of providence by Averroists, Pt. 2, PP. 160ff and PP. 136ff. Mandonnet's

summary of the tract *De Necessitate et Contingentia Causarum*, generally attributed to Siger can be read with interest, cf.

P. 165ff. The text of the tract is found in Pt. II, PP. 111-128. Props. 59, 58, 28, 5, etc. are directed against this negation of providence.

(5) cf. *Summa Theol.* I, Q. 22, *Cont. Gent.* III, Chs. 64-77, 94-100, *De Potentia*, Q. III, art. 7 and Q. V, etc.

Mandonnet explains (in *Op. Cit.* P. 161) how the position of Aquinas represents a reaction to the creative determinism maintained in the tract mentioned above. whereas the author of this tract, Averroes, and the Neo-Platonists describe creation as a mode of necessary emanation of the universe from God, Aquinas insists that God created the universe through an act of His will rather than through a necessity of His nature - cf. *S. Theol.* I, Q. 14, art. 8, Q. 19, art. 4; *Cont. Gent.* II, Ch. 23. The Neo-Platonic doctrine of emanation (as taught by Avicenna and Algazel) is expounded and criticized in *De Potentia*, Q. III, art. 4, PP. 151-153.

(6) cf. *Cont. Gent.* III, 64 & 93, 94 and *S. Theol.* I., Q. 22, art. 2 - where Aquinas singles out Democritus and the Epicurians as negators of providence. Aristotle and Averroes are cited as restricting the sway of providence to incorruptible things only. cf. also, : *De Pot.* Q. 6, art. 1; *In Sent.* I, dist. 39, Q. 2, a.2.

(7) cf. *S. Theol.* I, Q. 22, art. 2, *Cont. Gent.* III, 76.

(8) *S. Theol.* I, Q. 22, art. 4, *Cont. Gent.* III, 73.

(9) Cont. Gent. III, 71. On evil, contingency, liberty, fortune and chance - as falling within the order of divine providence, cf. the four consecutive chapters, 71-74.

(10) Aquinas writes, Cont. Gent. III, 70:

"Nor is it superfluous, if God can produce all natural effects by himself, that they should be produced by certain other causes: because this is not owing to the insufficiency of his power, but to the immensity of his goodness, wherefore it was his will to communicate his likeness to things not only in the point of their being but also in the point of their being causes of other things".

Note this second key passage in S. Theol. I. Q. 22, 3:

"For He governs things inferior by superior, not because of any defect in his power, but by reason of the abundance of His goodness; so that the dignity of causality is imparted even to creatures."

(11) cf. Cont. Gent. III, 65. As we have repeated ad nauseam this charge applies to the Loquentes (Mutakallims) in general. But it is the Ash'arites, in the first place, who are aimed at. Aquinas writes: "Hereby is refuted the position of certain Moslem Theologians (loquentium in lege Maurorum posito) who in order to be able to maintain that the world needs to be preserved by God, held that all forms are accidents and that no accident lasts for two instants, so that things would always be in a process of formation; as though a thing did not need an active cause except while in the

process of being made."

A casual reference to the same error is found in S. Theol. I, Q. 8, 1: "Hunc autem effectum causat Deus in rebus, non solum quando primo esse incipiunt, sed quandiu in esse conservatur." - Resp.

(12) Cont. Gent. III, 69.

(13) In the first paragraph of Cont. Gent. III, 69, Aquinas speaks of the "error of those who thought that no creature has an active part in the production of natural effects", without specifying the proponents of this thesis. The commentary of Ferrare^{nsis}, however, sends to Averroes, in Met. xii, text 18 et ix, text 7, and states explicitly that the 'Saracens' are here in question. This is confirmed by De Potentia, Q. 3, a. 7, Resp. Further on in both works, Aquinas criticizes Avic^{bron}'s teaching on the passivity of corporeal substances, owing to their remoteness from the First Cause, their quantitative mass and the absence of an inferior patient upon which they can act - as set forth in Fons Vitae, tract ii, 9, P. 40 seq.; tract iii, 44, P. 177; 45, P. 179 - Monast. 1895 - cf. Leonine edition, Opera Omnia, vol. 14, P. 202. cf. also, De Ver. Q. 5, art. 9, ad. 4; S. Theol. I. Q. 115, art. 1: - vs. Avic^{bron}; in Sent. II., dist. 1, Q. 1, art. 4, Sol.: - vs. Loquentes (anth.)

The impossibility of transitive operations, owing to the fact that all 'natural forms are accidents' and that accidents cannot pass from one object to the other is explicitly referred to the 'loquentes in lege maurorum' - as reported by 'Rabbi moyses' -

- and to this is conjoined the error that all production is creation. "Forms and accidents cannot be made out of matter, since matter is not a part of them. Hence if they be made they must be made out of nothing and this is to be created." Cont. Gent. III, 69, P. 166.

The teaching of Avicenna, - according to which 'substantial forms' emanate from the Active Intellect (or dator Formarum) as we have seen, *supra*, P. ; whereas 'accidental forms', being mere dispositions of matter, result from the action of lower (Sc. natural) agents - is cited with partial approbation as avoiding the error of the Platonists according to whom the Ideas are the causes of being to particular objects of sense, in so far as they participate in them. cf. ^{a/s} S. Theol. IP, Q. 45, a. 8; Q. 115, a. 1.

(14) Aquinas was certainly familiar with the casual references of Averroes to Ash'arite teaching in his commentaries, especially in the *Metaphysics* and the *Physics*. The commentary of Ferrare^{ms} on the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, published in the margin of the Leonine edition of Aquinas's works, sends to *Met.* xii, text 18 and ix, *Com.* 7 - in connection with the "error of those who attribute all operations to God", at the opening paragraph of Ch. 69, Bk. III. (cf. In *Met.*, ix. Ch. 4, P. 109a; xii, Ch. 3, P. 143a.) Also Averroes's references to 'Loquentes nostrae legis' in *Physic.* over the question of volitional activity in God, Bk. viii, 159b. On their teachings that accidents do not endure for one instant, *ib.* 190b, etc.

(15) Cont. Gent. III, 69, P. 168.

(16) Ibid, PP. 170, 171-2.

(17) cf. Cont. Gent. I, Chs. 86, 87, 88 - II, 24.

(18) This, I believe, is the clue to the false dilemma of absolute spontaneity and intellectual determinism, according to which freedom is impossible on the assumption of a rationally, imperative good determining the will. The distinction between what I called 'bad' and 'happy' necessity is borrowed from the Thomist, scholastic notion of 'violent' and 'natural' action: the former being action contrary to the nature of the agent; the latter being action coinciding with this nature. Aquinas calls these the 'necessity of violence' and the 'necessity of natural order'. cf., e.g., Cont. Gent. II, Ch. 30, P. 60.

(19) This famous principle which is central to Aristotle's Physics is commonly known as Ockham's law of Parsimony.

(20) Cont. Gent. III, 70.

(21) It is a tenet of Thomism that Being and True are convertible notions. cf. S. Theol. I, Q. 16, a. 3; De. Verit., Q. 1, a. 1 and Q. 21, a. 1. In S. Theol., ib., Aquinas puts the matter thus: "Verum autem quod est in rebus, convertitur cum ante secundum substantiam. Sed verum quod est in intellectu, convertitur cum ante, ut manifestativum cum manifestato" - Ad. br. This relationship of intelligible manifestation is described further in these terms: "Et est simile sicut si comparemus intelligibile ad ens. Non enim

potest intelligi ens, quin ens sit intelligibile; sed tamen potest intelligi ens, ita quod non intelligatur eius intelligibilitas" ad ter. cf. De Causis, I, 6, where Aquinas writes: "Actualitas rei est quasi lumen ejus", P. 228. Here he is interpreting the Aristotelian dictum that knowability is commensurate with the actuality of the object; cf. Met. IX, c. 10.

(22) cf. on this question: J. de Finance - Etre et agir dans la Phil. de St. Thomas, PP. 63ff.

(23) cf. Rep. Bk. VI, P. 396., tr. by Jowett, Oxford, 1875:

"In like manner the good may be said to be not only the author of knowledge in all things, but of their being and essence, and yet the good is not essence, but far exceeds essence in dignity and power."

(24) Tim., P. 28.

(25) Ibid, P. 29.

(26) Aquinas accepts this Platonic thesis that God's goodness and love are the first principle of creation. He attributes this thesis to Augustine. "For the divine goodness", he writes, "precedes as the end and first motive of creation, according to Augustine who says: 'Because God is good we exist' (De doct. Christ. I, 32)." Cont. Gent. II, 28-29. In Ib. I, 75, he argues that God wills other things in the act of willing himself. He concludes the chapter as follows: "This is confirmed by the authority of Holy Writ: for it is written (Wis. XI, 25): 'For thou lovest all things that are

and hatest none of the things which thou hast made'." The multiplicity of things is explained, in the same passage, as the outcome of God's desire to communicate His likeness to things. cf. also, lb. I, 29.

In I, 91, he alludes to Aristotle's statement in Met. I, IV, 1., about Parmenides and Hesiod who taught that Love was the First Principle of things, - which he corroborates with the authority of Dionysius. "Certain philosophers also taught that God's love is the principle of things; in agreement with which is the saying of Dionysius (Div. Nom. iv.) that God's Love did not allow Him to be unproductive'."

(27) Ennéades, tr. Bre'hier, Paris 1925, vol.III, PP.167-8

(28) Ibid.P.166

(29) The Liber de Causis consists of 32 propositions embodying the substance of Neo-Platonic emanationism, and is an Arabic recension of Proclus's Elements of Theology. The latter was translated into Latin by William of Moerbeke, at the instance of Aquinas - cf. Mandonnet, Siger I, P.138; Haureau, de la Philosophie Scolastique, T. 1. PP.384-390; Gilson, Phil.au moyen Age, P.378. The Arabic origin of de Causis is alluded to by Aquinas in his commentary on de Causis, who notes its relation to Proclus's Elements. cf. op.cit. I, lect.1, (Opus.X)

(30). Elem.Theol., Prop.25. Eng. Tr.by T.Taylor, London, 1816, vol.II, P.320.

(31) This is the date proposed by Grabman. Mandonnet proposes,

1269-73.cf.Gilson, Le Thomisme, P.533.

(32) The first great commentator of Dionysius was Maximus the Confessor (580-662). Yet it was through Erigena that his Neo-Platonic mysticism exercised such decisive influence on the 13th century, and especially on the three subsequent centuries.

cf. Gilson - Phil.au Moyen Age, P.85 and P.201 ff.

(33) Neither the exact name nor the date or birthplace of the Pseudo-Dionysius are known. The first mention of him occurs in 532 (533) at the Council of Constantinople, where his authority was invoked by Severus, Patriarch of Antioch, in support of Monophysite teachings.

cf. Rolt-Dion. the Areopagite on div.names, etc. Int., PP.2-3.

Gilson - Phil.au Moyen Age, P.80.

(34) cf. Summa Theol. I, Q.12 and Q.13; cont Gent.I, 29-35.

A complete analysis of the Thomist teaching on this question is given in Maritain - Degrés du Savoir, ch.IV - 'On the divine names'.

(35) cf. de malo, Q.I. Note the many references to the Divine Names. Also cont.Gent.III, 1-16.

(36) cf. Summa Theol. Qs.50-63; cont.Gent.II, 91 ff, 46-55.

Aquinas has written a whole tract on angelology: De substantiis separatis, of which chs.16,17 and 18 are based on Dionysius "qui super alios ea quae ad spirituales substantias pertinent, excellentius tradidit" - Ch.16, P.128, Oposc.VII.

(37) cf. Cont.Gent.I, 91.

(38) Div.Names, ch.IV,1,P.87. The analogy of the Good and the sun is derived from Plato, cf. Note.P.85, supra. This analogy is developed further, on PP.91-93 in Platonic terms.

In expounding this passage, Aquinas remarks with a view to warding off the danger of determinism, in the emanation of God's goodness through a mode of natural necessity rather than intellect and will, that unlike the sun, God's essence being 'intelligere et velle' the diffusion of His essence comes about through intellect and will. Exp.super de div.nom.,P.332.

The teaching of Aquinas on the voluntary mode of God's activity will be taken up in sequel.

(39) Div.Names, P.88.

(40) Ibid.P.95.

(41) Ibid.ch.V, PP.136-37 and P.140. Dionysius states that being is the first gift of God, "the most primary of His gifts"- P.136. This being of things is at the same time the source of (1) their premanence, and (2) of their being principles of other things. For it is "only through their participation in existence that they exist and enable things to participate in them." P.137

(42) Ibid.PP.96-7

(43) Ibid.PP.100-1

(44) Ibid.P:115

(45)cf.Ibid. P.116

(46) ¹bid.PP.113-4. Compare the Thomist doctrine that all things act with a view to a good and that the cause of evil is a good. Cont.Gent. III, 3,4,10,71. De Malo, Q.1., as,1.2,3; S.Theol.I, Q.49,a.1.

(47) cf. S.Theol.I, Q.5, a.3; cont.Gent.II, ^{4; VII,} 3, 20. De Verit. Q21.a.2.

(48) cf. S.Theol.¹, Q.5.a.3 and a.1. Cont.Gent.I,37;II,7.

Aquinas writes, in S.Theol.,I,5,3:"Dicendum quod omnes ens, inquantum est ens, est bonum. Omne enim ens, inquantum est ens, est in actus et quodammodo perfectum, qui omnis actus perfectio quaedam est." On the qualification of this position, cf. Infra.P. 97 Note 82.

(49) cf. De Pot., Q.2,a.1. Cont. Gent.II, 6,7,8,etc. On 'form' as the principle of being and operation, cf.Cont.Gent.III,7,20.

(50) cf. Dionysius - Div.Names, ch.V; Plotinus - Enne'ades, III P.167 ff.and 175 ff.

On the identification of Form and Act in Aristotle, cf. Met. IX,8,1050b, 2.

(51) cf.S.Theol.I, Q.5,a.1. For a discussion of this question cf.J.de Finance - Etre et agir dans la Phil.de St.Thomas, PP.183-90

(52) Note in S.Theol.I, Q.5,a.2.Ad pr., the finalistic interpretation of the Dionysian notion of the Good which he attempts. cf. also, article 4, Ib., where the authority of Aristotle on this question is opposed to Dionysius (sed contra)etc.

(53) Averroes, in rejecting the emanationist interpretation of

Aristotle by Avicenna and Al-Farabi, was therefore perfectly true to the spirit of the Master. cf supra, P.154 He was equally true to this spirit in dismissing the question of the 'genesis' of things, or their creation out of nothing, as we have seen in chapter three, sect.III.
(+ Note 102; p. 123 + N. 48)

(54) I content myself here with noting the great difficulty to the vindication of creation ex nihilo which the Aristotelian distinctions between Act and Potency raises. The notion of Act in Aristotle is dictated by the necessities of a dualist metaphysics; and has meaning only in contradiction^{stin} to potency. Aristotle is, therefore, perfectly consistent with himself when he carries this dualism to the extreme and sets Act and Potency, God and Matter up against each other, as two co-eternal principles. Creationism, on the other hand, can be rationally vindicated only in terms of a monist metaphysics in which the initial distinction between Act and Potency does not as much as arise. How the Thomist doctrine of creation ex nihilo can be fitted into a metaphysics of Act-Potency is very difficult to see. A deeper reading of Aquinas would show that his doctrine of creation is of Neo-Platonic, (notably Dionysian) extraction; an emanationist monism whose philosophical scaffolding is Aristotelian, and from which the determinist 'sting' has been artfully removed. In fact, Aquinas speaks of creation as a process of 'emanation' of things from the first Principle in the S.Theol., I, Q.45.

(55) Supra P.118, Note 48.

(56) cont.Gent.II,15;S.Theol.I, Q.44,a.1.

(57) S.Theol.I.Q.5,a.1.: "Sed bonum dicit rationem perfecti, quod est appetibile, et per consequens dicit rationem ultimi."

(58) Ibid.as.1 and 2. De Ver.,Q.21, a.3. and 1 - 2.

(59) cf.cont.Gent III,17-19

(60) Aquinas explains, "cont. Gent,I,that the object of the divine will is the divine essence, which is identical with the divine goodness (I,ch.74,II,22,28). This God wills of necessity (I.ch.80). Inasmuch as his essence is complete in itself, God cannot be said to will things of necessity (ch.81). His will of other things is, therefore, an instance of his will of his infinite goodness, inasmuch as other things participate in it (ch.75)-,but only in such wise that these things stand to it in a position of superfluity, since it is complete prior to their creation.

cf.also,S.Theol.I,Q.19,a.2.

cf. supra note (2) - ch.4.

(61) Cont.Gent.III,21. The character of causality as a perfection superadded to the perfection of sheer being is described thus: "A thing is perfect in itself before being able to cause another ... Hence to be the cause of another thing is a perfection that accrues to a thing last."

cf.S.Theol.Q.115,a.1. -also.

(62) cont.Gent. III,69.

Causality is stated to imply perfection in things in a threefold manner:

1. First, inasmuch as it manifests the abundance of the creature's

perfection.

2. Second, inasmuch as the good proper to one creature is shared by another and thus diffused unto other things.

3. Third, inasmuch as causality is a principle of order in the universe, whereby active and passive things are ordered unto each other.

And *Ib. above.*

(63) Aristotle, Physics, I, 8. The argument is clearly directed against Parmenides and the Eleatics. cf. also I, 9. cf. Garrigou-Lagrange, God, etc. Vol. I, P. 194 f.

(64) cf. Ont. Gent. II, 17, 19. De Pot. Q. 3, a. 2. S. Theol. I, Q. 45, a. 2 - a. 2.; II. sent, dist. 1, Q. 1, a. 2.

(65) This distinction is necessary, since the Form is Final Cause, only when conceived as the abstract or ideal perfection towards which an entity strives. In the constituted, concrete entity, the Formal and Final Causes coincide, as the end coincides with the fulfillment of that of which it is the end. cf. Met. IX, 8, 1050 a-b.

(66) The various forms of motion are reducible, according to Aristotle, to three: quantitative, qualitative and local. Physics. V. 1; I, 7. Unqualified becoming or coming-to-be simpliciter is not motion (V. 1. 225a, 25 ff); the possibility of such becoming, even in the case of substances, is precluded by the fact that every form of becoming presupposes a subject or substratum (I, 7, 190b-). In 190a, 38, Aristotle leaves open this possibility which he so readily discounts, by arguing that 'only substances are said to

come to be in the unqualified sense. In Ib.8, he explains in what way he is in agreement with the Parmenidian doctrine that Being does not come to be and in what way he is not -, which proves conclusively that an absolute genesis of being for him is unthinkable.

(67) The Greek for the Aristotelian Act is 'ἐντελέχεια'; for Potency 'δύναμις'. cf. Phys. I, 9; Met. V, 22; especially, Met. IX, 3, 1047a, 30 sq; 6, 1048b, 28 sq. ; 7, 1050a-, 22; on the distinction between energy and entelechy.
cf. on this question, De Finance - Être et agir, p. 6 ff.

(68) Met. I, 9, p. 991a. Aristotle writes: "Above all one might discuss the question what on earth the forms contribute to sensible things, either to those that are eternally or to those that come into being or cease to be. For they cause neither movement nor change in them." That ideas cannot be alleged to be causes of things as Plato claims in Phaedo (100 D) is discussed in the same passage.

(69) Div. Names, v, p. 136 ff; cont. Gent. I, 22; II, 15.
S. Theol. I, Q. 3, a. 4; Q. 13, a. 11; De Pot. q. 7. a. 2.
comp. Theol., I. c. 11.

(70) That God is His own Being - cont. Gent. I, 22, S. Theol. q. 3 a. 4
That God is His own Goodness - cont. Gent. I, 37-8
That God's action is His own essence - Ib. II, 8-9

(71) Op.cit.q.2,a.1. It is very significant that Aquinas discusses the procession of the divine persons and creation in the same context, and reduces them to the same movement of self-communication on the part of God.

(72) Aquinas attributes this dictum to Aristotle (4.meteor.iii,1.) He writes, cont.gent.ii,6;"it is a sign of perfection in things of the lower world that they are able to produce their like, as stated by the philosopher." This does not change the fact, that, we believe, that the doctrine of the self-communicability of the Good is in a radical way, of Platonic and Neo-Platonic origin.

(73) Cont.Gent. II,6,7,15., cf¹ also, S.Theol.I,Q.19,a.2.

(74) cf.De Ente et Essentia, Cap.IV;I cont, dist.2.Q.1.a.1,-ad 1;
P.35, a.4., ad 1. (a.4, ad. 1.

S.Theol. I,Q.3, a.5.- Resp.

cf. the discussion of Roland-Gosselin in De Ente et Essentia, PP.185 ff.

(75) cf.cont.gent.II,16; S.Theol.,Q.44,a.2.

For incommunicability of creative power: cont.Gent.II,20-1;

S.Theol.I,Q.45,a.5; De Potentia,Q.3.,a.4.

(76) Div.Names,IV,P.88.

Speaking of the Angels, as the first creatures, Dionysius writes :

"Moreover all things appertaining to the celestial hierarchy, the angelic purifications, the illuminations and the attainments which perfect them in all angelic perfection and come from the all-creative and originating goodness, from whence it was given them

to possess their created goodness - and to manifest the secret Goodness in themselves and so to be (as it were) the angelic Evangelists of the Divine Silence and to stand forth as shining lights revealing Him that is within the shrine." cf. also Ibid. I, PP. 53-4 and 56 ff. That creation utters its cause and Term, 'who is Nameless, Ib.P. 60 f., P. 71-2.

(77) In expounding the divine names, Dionysius distinguishes between two categories: undifferentiated and differentiated names; the former applying to the total Godhead, the latter to the three persons of the Trinity. The former are negative names, since they relate to the Nameless Godhead in His super-intelligible and super-essential Being; the latter he describes as 'emanations and manifestations', since they utter the ineffable secret of the Godhead - cf. Div. Names, P. 69 ff.; also, Ch. II in toto. "The Initiates of our divine tradition," he writes, "designate the undifferentiated attributes of the transcendantly ineffable and unknowable permanence as hidden, incommunicable ultimates, but the beneficent differentiations of the supreme Godhead they call emanations and manifestations... They say concerning the Divine Unity or Super-essence, that the undivided Trinity holds in a common unity, without distinction its Subsistence beyond being, its Godhead beyond Deity, its Goodness beyond excellence" Ib.P. 69

(78) cf. Dionysius - Div. Names, II, P. 72 and 78 ff. Also, V, P. 137.

(79) S. Theol., I, Q. 2, as. 1 and 2; Q. 13, as. 1 and 5; cont. Gent. I, 10-12, 30; II, 54. De Trinit., Q. 1, a. 3.

(80) De Verit. Q.10, a.12.

De Trinit., Q.1, a.2. ; S.Theol., I, Q.121, a.2.; Q.2, as.1 and 2.

Aquinas distinguishes between two methods of proof:

1. a priori (una quae est per causam, et dicitur propter quid,
et haec est priora simpliciter).

2. a posteriori (or: per effectum et dicitur demonstratio quia;
et haec est per ea quae sunt priora quoad nos) - S.Theol. Q.2, a.2. Resp.

Demonstration through cause, and demonstration through effect do not correspond fully with the Kantian distinction between a priori and empirical (or a posteriori) procedure. The Kantian distinction has regard to the origin of knowledge; the Thomist to the nature of the middle term employed. The a posteriori method is obviously not one 'through the effects'; since for Kant the sensuous data, which represent the 'material content' of knowledge (or manifold of intuition) are designated as 'impressions' or 'sensuous intuitions', rather than 'effects'. Sensibility is consistently envisaged in the Aesthetic from the standpoint of a 'receptive subject', never an 'active object' - of which the impressions can be said to be the effects. Needless it is to say that this is the outcome of the Kantian conception of causality as a 'pure category of the understanding', rather than an 'active intrinsic power' in the object.

(81') cf. The masterly discussion of P. Garrigou-Lagrange, in God, "His Existence and His Nature, and the refutation of the empirical and idealist objections to the Thomist proofs. Vol. I, P. 61 ff. and 242 ff.

(81) De Trinit. q.I, a.2 - Resp.cf.on this whole question, Gilson Le Thomisme, PP.140 ff and 69 ff.

(82) cont.Gent. 1,22. "Existence denotes a kind of actuality: since a thing is said to exist, not through being in potentiality but through being in act." The same principle is enunciated in 1b.II,53, in the course of proving that in intellectual substances there is composition of act and potency. cf.also, in Sent,1, dist. 8,9,5,a.2. In S.Theol.I,q.3.a.4 - Aquinas argues that esse is to essence what act is to potency, since "esse est actualitas omnis formae vel naturae" - which implies that 'esse' is a form of actuality superior to form itself.cf.cont.Gent.II,54 for same. This is the main thesis of Gilson, cf. Le Thomisme, p.43 ff and 133 ff. The identification of Being and Act would have to be qualified in two ways: 1. Esse is Act par excellence, - as in the case of God who alone is 'ipsum esse subsistens'. and 2. This 'esse' transcends even the Form, as a principle of actuality.

The latter qualification is dictated in the Thomist metaphysics by the necessity of determining a unitary principle of being in composite substances, which transcends the form. This is how Aquinas sets himself in opposition to Averroes with whom the Form was the exclusive principle of being, as we have seen - supra,p.117. Aquinas, at least with respect to his conception of existence as a principle superadded to essence, leans towards the Avicennian position. cf. De Ente et Essentia, cap.I and II; and discussion by R.Gosselin, p.xvi ff, 189 ff.; 157 ff.

Gilson holds (op.cit.PP.56-60) that the Thomist position is generically different from both the Averroist and Avicennian positions. In his emphasis on the unique originality of Aquinas's notion of the 'esse', Gilson tends to overstate his case. cf.also, De Potentia, Q.7., a.2 - especially ad 9 m. and the discussion of Gilson in Thomisme, PP.50-52.

(83) cf. De Pot.Q.3, a.5. It is noteworthy that Aquinas proves, from the degrees of being, that all things refer to God as 'unum ens, quod est perfectissimum et verissimum ens'; from the dependence of the relative on the absolute (quod est per alterum est reducitur sicut in causam ad aliud quod est per se), that God stands to things as 'actus purus, in quo nulla sit compositio'; to which things ought to be referred as the term upon which they all depend, as 'ens quod est ipsum suum esse' - Resp. Here it is seen how the conception of God as Absolute Being and Absolute Act converge. Also cf. Comp.Theol.I, p.74; II, sent. dist.1, Q.1, a.2 sol.

(84) S.Theol.I, Q.2, a.3. 'quarta via'; cont.Gent. I.13, Comp.Theol. I, c.68; In De pot.Q.3.a.5.-Resp., Aquinas notwithstanding his attributing this argument to Aristotle in 2 Summas, acknowledges its natural affiliation to Plato's doctrine of participation -, as would seem to be truly the case, in the latter passage.

(85) cf. on this argument, Gilson, Le Thomisme, PP.105-111 Aristotle remarks (Met.II.1.20 seq.) that the principles of eternal things being most true, are causes of the being of other things, since 'as each thing is in respect of being, so is it in respect

of truth.' In Met. IV, 4, 32 seq., he agrees that there must be a pre-eminent truth which serves as the norm of grades of truth. The Thomist argument rests upon two moments of reasoning: 1. the correspondence between being and truth - which is indisputably of Aristotelian origin (cf. Met. IX, 10: $\bar{\chi}$, 7) and 2. the tendency of things to approximate their First Term, which is of Platonic extraction.

A full discussion of this argument and of its exact relation to Platonism can be found in Garrigou-Lagrange, God, Vol. I, PP. 302-345.

(86) S. Theol. I, Q. 48, a. 5: "Actus autem est duplex: primus ~~ad~~ secundus. Actus quidem primus est forma et integritas rei; actus autem secundus est operatio." - Resp. Also, De Pot., Q. I, a. 1, - Resp; In Sent., I, dist. 24, Q. 1, a. 3.

(87) S. Theol. I, Q. 11, a. 1. "Unde manifestum est quod esse cuiuslibet rei consistit in indivisione. Et inde est quod unumquodque, sicut custodit suum esse, ita custodit suam unitatem." On the convertibility of being and one - S. Theol. Ib., ad a. 2. Gilson, le Thomisme, P. 149.

(88) Cont. Gent. II, 45; Comp. Theol. I, C. 72 & 73.
S. Theol. I, Q. 47, a. 1.

(89) Plotinus argues that the One cannot be any of the existing things, because then it could not generate them; nor their totality, since then it would be posterior to them and would thereby cease to

be their Principle. He is emphatically opposed to a Pantheistic view which would identify the One with every single thing. For then "everything would be identical with everything else. All things would be jumbled up together in confusion and there would be no distinction in things." *Enneades*, III, P. 166, cf. also, P. 165. On the transcendence of the One, Plotinus writes: "Certainly this Principle is nothing, nothing of the things of which it is the principle; neither being, nor substance, nor life can be affirmed of it; because it is superior to all these things." *Ib.* P. 167.

(90) In the commentary on *De Causis* (Lect. vi.) Aquinas concedes that the First Cause transcends being inasmuch as it is 'its own infinite being'. "*Causa autem prima secundum Platonicos quidem est supra ens, inquantum essentia bonitatis et unitatis, quae est causa prima, excedit etiam ipsum ens separatum ...; sed secundum rei veritatem causa prima est supra ens inquantum est ipsum esse infinitum.*" PP. 229-30. This is in substance the position developed in *S. Theol.* I, Q. 3, a. 3. and *Cont. Gent.* I, 22; and according to which the ultimate distinction between God and the creature consists in that in God alone essence and existence coincide and exhaust each other. In this manner His existence excels all existing things and He can be said not to exist - *Ib.* Q. 12, a. 1 - ad. 3.

(91) *S. Theol.* I, Q. 13, a. 3; *Cont. Gent.* I, 29-34. For the doctrine of analogy, the important monograph of Pénido - *le rôle de l'analogie en theol. dog.* ; Maritain, *les degrés du savoir*, Ch. IV ad Annexe II; Gilson, *le Thomisme*, Ch. V, PP. 140-170.

(92) S. Theol. I, q. 12, a. 1 & 2., q. 13, a. 1; Cont. Gent. III, 47, 51-54. It is through this distinction that Aquinas reconciles the apparently conflicting claims of negative and positive theology. cf. Cont. Gent. I, 30 & 14. "Accordingly in every term employed by us, there is imperfection as regards the mode of signification, and imperfection is unbecoming to God, although the thing signified is becoming to God in some eminent way wherefore, as Dionysius teaches (Coel. Hier. 11, 3), such terms can be either affirmed or denied of God: affirmed, on account of the signification of the term; denied, on account of the mode of signification." et sq. Ib. ch. 30.

(93) Ibid. ch. 30. S. Theol. I, q. 13, a. 4; q. 6, a. 3. Comp. Theol. I, c. 21 & 22.

In Cont. Gent. III, 20, Aquinas writes: "Wherefore, since a thing is good so far as it is perfect, God's being is His perfect goodness; for in God to be, to live, to be wise, to be happy and whatever else is seen to pertain to perfection and goodness are one and the same in God, as though the sum total of His goodness were God's very being."

(94) S. Theol. I, q. 13, a. 2.; De Pot. q. 7, a. 5; De Ver. q. 2, a. 2. In the latter, Origen and Augustine are referred to as holding the second view. Also, Cont. Gent. I, 31.

It is noteworthy that Aquinas accepts both these aspects of negative theology, as regards the inexpressible mode of divine predicates, in Cont. Gent. I, 30. "Now the mode of super-eminence in which the aforesaid perfections are found in God, cannot be

expressed in terms employed by us, except either by negation, as when we say God is eternal or infinite, or by referring Him to other things, as when we say that He is the first cause or the sovereign good."

(95) S. Theol. I, Q. 13, a. 6; De Ver., Q. 4, a. 1; Cont. Gent., I., 34..

(96) S. Theol. I. Q. 4, a. 2. This article is permeated with Dionysian influence. The infinity of the divine Being who comprises in His uniqueness all perfections, as well as the self-diffusive causality of His Being, are stated in the exact Dionysian terms we have outlined above.

cf. also, Comp. Theol. I, C. 21, 22; Cont. Gent. I, 28; Sent. I, Dist. 1, Q. 1, a. 2,3; In Sent. I, Dist. 22, Q. 1, a. 2.

(97) "At the basis of an analogical concept", writes Pénido, "we find a reality (life, goodness, being, etc.) which unfolds itself according to diverse modes, albeit immanent. This immanence is the ground of unity, but this diversity averts absolute unity." Pénido quotes here De Pot., Q. 9, a. 2 - ad. 6. "In analogis consideratur non diversa realitates, sed diversi modi essendi eiusdem realitatis." cf. le rôle de l'analogie, PP. 53-55.

(98) This too is the motive of Dionysius in affirming being and negating it of God: "For God is not existent in any ordinary sense, but in a simple and undefinable manner embracing and anticipating all existence in Himself. Hence he is called 'King of the Ages', because

in Him and around Him all being is and subsists, and ~~the~~ neither was, nor will be, nor hath entered the life-process, nor is doing so, nor ever will, or rather he does not even exist, but is the essence of existence in things that exist." - Div. Names, V, P. 135.

(99) cf. Supra, P. 1917 P. 138

(100) Aquinas declares, in S. Theol. I., Q. 2, a. 3, his predilection for the 'first way' "Prima autem et manifestior via est, quae sumitur ex parte motus." But the first and second ways are both causal in character. The first proves the existence of a 'cause of movement', the latter an 'efficient cause'. Gilson notes the affinity between the two ways in Thomisme, P. 100.

(101) S. Theol. I, Ch. 2, a. 3. Cont. Gent. I, 13. Garrigou-Lagrange, Op. Cit., PP. 289-293, with which should be read the refutation of empiricism and agnosticism, PP. 84ff.

cf. the exposition of this proof in Gilson, le Thomisme, PP. 99-102.

(102) Cont. Gent. III, 69; Comp. Theol. I, 124, 130.

S. Theol. I, Q. 22, a. 3.

(103) cf. S. Theol. I, Q. 45, a. 8; and De Pot., Q. 3, a. 8 - for the problem here expounded.

On creation as the bestowing of 'being' on the creature:
cf. S. Theol. I, Q. 45, a. 2; Q. 44, a. 2; Cont. Gent. II, 15;
Comp. Theol. I, 118.

On incommunicability of the creative power, cf. Cont. Gent.

II, 21; S. Theol. I, Q. 45, a. 5; De Pot., Q. 3, a. 4; Comp. Theol. I, 120.

The proportionality of the creative power to the divine being and of the productive power to the being of the creature is safeguarded through the conception of Act, an analogically proportionate to the being of that of which it is the Act, in S. Theol. I, Q. 115, a. 1 - Resp.

In II Sent., dist., Q. 1, a. 2, Aquinas writes: "Unde causalitas generantis vel alterantis non sic se extendit ad omne illud quod in re invenitur; sed ad forma^m quae de potentia in actum educitur (same position as in De Pot. Ib., Resp.): sed causalitas creatis extendit ad omne id quod est in re; et ideo creatio ex nihilo dicitur esse." - Sol.

(104) cf. S. Theol. I, Q. 3, a. 5; Cont. Gent., I, 25, 24; De Pot., Q. 7, a. 3; Comp. Theol. I, C. 13.

The Aristotelian argument for the non-generic character of being (cf. Met., III, 998b.) rests on the perception of the fact that the differentia is not predicable of its genus; so that if being were a genus, the differentia would not be. Every genus is specified by a differentia which is extrinsic to the essence of that genus. But no differentia can be extrinsic to being; since thereby it would not be. The metaphysical consequence of this position is that it culminates in an absolute pantheism which renders the solution of the problem of diversity impossible. Aquinas writes, interpreting this text of Aristotle in S. Theol. I, Q. 3, a. 5: "Ostendit autem philosophus in III, Met. quod ens non potest esse genus aliquid; omne enim genus habet differentiae qua sunt extra essentiam generis; nulla autem differentia posset invenire; quae esset extra

ens, quia non ens non posset esse differentia."

That God is not in a genus can be shown (in Ib. and De Pot. q. 7, a. 3) thus: A member of a genus is differentiated in a determinate way. If we discover a hypothetical member in that genus whose mode of differentiation is indeterminate, because absolute - as in the case of the first being; then this member has clearly transcended its genus. Since God possesses all positive perfections in a unity of self-subsisting being, his being transcends all modes of subsistence so as to be incapable of being included in a genus. Cf. S. Theol. I, q. 6, a. 3; q. 4, a. 2; Cont. Gent., III, 20; II, 8; I, 38, 45 - for God's mode of possessing knowledge, goodness, will, in the one unity of his essence.

(105) The problem is stated in identical terms in ch. 98 of Cont. Gent. Book 3. The title of the chapter is: "How it is possible, and how it is impossible, for God to do something outside the order of His providence." The same formula is restated in De Pot., q. 6, a. 1.

(106) In Cont. Gent., II, 28-29, Aquinas disproves "the error of some who strove to prove that God cannot do save what He does, because He cannot do except what He ought to do." P. 51.

In Ib. 30, he shows that "though all things depend on God's will as their first cause, which is not necessitated in operating except by the supposition of His purpose, nevertheless absolute necessity is not therefore excluded from things, so that we are obliged to assert that all things are contingent." - P. 56.

In De Pot., q. 6, a. 1, he singles out three errors:

1. The error of an 'immanent, rational determinism' which precludes the possibility of the intervention of a supernatural cause in the course of natural events, as in Anaxagoras.

2. The error of emanationist determinism, according to which God's mode of operation is determined by the necessity of acting through the mediacy of the intelligences; particular causes being inaccessible to Him.

3. The error of 'Creative determinism', according to which God acts through a necessity of His nature.

(107) Cont. Gent. I, 74; S. Theol. I, Q. 19, a. 3.

(108) Cont. Gent. I, 75, 76, 79.

(109) cf. Ibid; also: Ib. II, 12-14; S. Theol. Q. 45, a. 3.

(110) That God does not act of natural necessity - Cont. Gent. II, 23; 26 ; S. Theol. I, Q. 19, a. 3; De Pot. Q. 1, a. 5; Comp. Theol. I, 97 ; I Sent. dist. 43, Q. 2, a. 1; De Verit., Q. 23, a. 4. That God acts according to His wisdom; Cont. Gent. II, 24. That a reason of the divine will can be assigned; Ibid. I, 86-7. This is reduced, in Cont. Gent. III, 97, to the divine goodness, as regards God's necessary volition of Himself; and to multiplicity or hierarchisation, as regards the multitude of created things. cf. Comp. Theol. I, 101 & 102. On free will in God, cf. Cont. Gent. I, 88; S. Theol. I, Q. 19, a. 10.

(111) Cont. Gent. II, 28-29; I, Sent., dist. 43, Q. 2, a. 2.

(112) Cont. Gent. II, Ib. ; P. 51-2.

(113) Ibid. P. 51 - Aquinas writes: "Nevertheless although nothing to which anything can be due precedes the universal creation of things, something uncreated precedes it, and this is the principle of creation. This may be considered in two ways. For the divine goodness precedes as the end and first motive of creation ... Also, His knowledge and will precede, as by them things are brought into being."

(114) Aquinas thus concedes a mode of necessity immanent to the divine Being; which can be described as "the determinism of divine wisdom", in its relation to the divine will. cf. De Ver., Q. 23, a. 6 - Resp. and ad 4m. De Pot. q. 1, a. 5 - Resp. "Sic autem "

That ^{God} acts in accordance with His wisdom and knowledge,
cf. Cont. Gent. II, 24.

(115) Cont. Gent. II, 28-29, P. 53.

(116) Ibid. I, 83; De Pot. q. 1, a. 5, Resp.; De Verit. q. 23, a. 4, ad. 1.

(117) Cont. Gent. I, 83.

(118) Cont. Gent. II, 28-29, P. 54.

(119) Ibid, ^{cf.} 30. It is noteworthy that Aquinas considers this necessity a necessity inherent in being. "From these principles, in

so far as they are principles of being", he writes, "a threefold absolute necessity is found in things." P. 58.

(120) Here Aquinas makes his classical distinction between 'intrinsic' and 'extrinsic' action (cf. also, Cont. Gent. I, 45, 73 ; S. Theol. I, Q. 14, a. 2 and 4)

- action which remains in the agent and action which goes beyond it. In the former case the necessity is immanent in the essence of the agent: in so far as this essence is simple; in the latter it is consequent upon the 'form' of the agent of necessity, unless this form is hindered by an external factor. The former, however, is always determined to act once it is actualized by its actualizing principle, as in the case of the 'intelligible species' in the act of intellection, - unlike the latter which might be hindered through an extraneous factor. The instance which Aquinas adduces in illustrating the latter mode of necessity is that of fire: "If fire is hot, it is necessary that it have the power to heat, although it is not necessary that it heat, since it may be hindered by something extrinsic." - Cont. Gent. II, 30, P. 60.

This is exactly how Averroes solves the difficulty - Tahafut, P. 521.

(121) Cont. Gent., Ibid.

(122) Ibid. On the finalistic determinism of the good, cf. Cont. Gent. II, Chs. 2 - 10. The Thomist teaching on the question of moral freedom and the determinism of the good is expounded in Maritain: Freedom in the Modern World, London, 1940.

(123) cf. Cont. Gent. III, 71, 72, 94. Aquinas writes, against

the Loquentes (Ibid, Ch. 97) in a passage which sums up his whole teaching on this problem: "It is therefore clear that the dispensations of providence are according to a certain reason, and yet this reason presupposes the divine will. Accordingly ^{by} a twofold error is refuted by what we have said. First, there is the error of the Moslem theologians in the Law of the Mohammedans, as Rabbi Moses relates (Guide, iii, 25) according to whom the sole reason why fire heats rather than chills is so because God so wills. Secondly, we refute the error of those who assert that the ordering of causes proceeds from divine providence by way of necessity. Both of which are false." P. 51.

(124) cf. ~~Ch. IV~~, Supra, note 110.

(125) Cont. Gent. I, 74.

(126) Cont. Gent. I, 49; S. Theol. I, Q. 14, a. 5; I. Sent., dist. 38, q. 1, a. 1; De Verit., q. 2, a. 3. That God knows even the things which are not: Cont. Gent. I, 66; S. Theol. I, Q. 14, a. 9; De Verit. q. 2, a. 8; I. Sent. dist. 38, q. 1, a. 4.

That he knows the things which shall be:

Cont. Gent. I, 67; S. Theol. I, Q. 14, a. 13; I. Sent. dist. 38, q. 1, a. 5; De Verit., q. 2, a. 12; Comp. Theol. I, c. 133.

(127) Cont. Gent. I, 26, 27.

(128) This is how Aquinas puts it:

"This universal order in respect whereof all things are

ordered by divine providence, may be considered in two ways: namely, with regard to things subject to that order, and with regard to the reason of the order, which depends on the principle of the order". Cont. Gent. III, 98, P. 53.

(129) Cont. Gent. III, P. 98.

(130) De Pot., Q. 6, a. 1, ad. 1m; Cont. Gent. III, 100.

(131) Cont. Gent. III, 99. The manifestation of God's power is stated explicitly to be the 'motive' of miracle, P. 57. That intervention in the course of nature by God is designed to advance His providence, cf. De Pot., Q. 6, a. 1 - ad 14, 19, 21.

(132) Ibid ; De Pot., Q. 6, a. 1, ad 6m. "Dicendum quod Deus non facit contra rationes naturales mutabili voluntate; non Deus ab aeterno praevidit et voluit se facturum quod in tempore facit. Sic ergo instituit naturae cursum, ut tamen praeordinaretur in aeterna sua voluntate quod praeter cursum istum grandoque facturum erat."

(133) Miracle, being referable to the action of the first Cause, can therefore be God's work alone, although it might be done through the agency of humans.

Cont. Gent. III, 102;. In Ibid, 103 and De Pot., Q. 6, a. 3 -, Aquinas criticises Avicenna's 'naturalistic' account of miracle through the agency of separate substances. (sc. the dator formarum alluded to above, Supra, P.17+P.47)

(134) Cont. Gent. III, 100.

(135) Ibid. ; De Pot., Q. 6, a. 1, ad 19m.

(136) Cont. Gent. III, 100.

(137) In De Pot., Q. 6, a. 2, ad 3 - Aquinas distinguishes three types of 'miracles' -, i.e., deeds exceeding the powers of nature and falling within God's power. Certain miracles are above the powers of nature (e.g. Incarnation); others contrary to nature (e.g.: that the Virgin conceive); still others are beside (præter) the powers of nature (e.g.: the conversion of water into wine, the instantaneous healing of the sick, etc.). In the extraordinary manner of their happening, all these events exceed the powers of nature.

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